Rousseau's Reader

Strategies of Persuasion and Education

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For my parents, Ann and Jarrett Scott,
who encouraged me to be a reader

Chapter 3

The Education of the Reader in *Emile*

Rousseau's treatise *Emile, or On Education* promises to be of particular interest in examining how he educates his reader. The author himself considered *Emile* to be his "greatest and best book" (*Dialogues*, *CW*, 1:23). Yet, curiously, *Emile* has received disproportionately little attention from scholars compared to his other works. Perhaps this relative inattention is due either to the content of the work or to its form, or perhaps to both. As for the content, on the one hand, the title announces a pedagogical treatise, and that is how *Emile* has often been read, often narrowly so. On the other hand, *Emile* contains far more than pedagogical advice and in fact ranges over a vast array of subjects, from moral psychology to religion to the education of females to politics, and this very complexity and variety have impeded global interpretation of *Emile* and encouraged scholars to take up in piecemeal fashion the subjects it treats. As for the form of the work, its hybrid genre as both treatise and novel, or treatise-novel, has perplexed readers and reinforced the partial approach to interpreting its contents. Over the course of this chapter and the following three, I examine how the form and content of *Emile* work together to educate the reader. In this chapter I investigate some of the narrative strategies Rousseau employs to challenge the reader to adopt a new perspective on human nature, to come to see the children before his eyes as corrupt and artificial and to see Rousseau's imaginary pupil as somehow true or real.

The title promises an educational project, and the work delivers on that promise, for it is indeed devoted to raising an imaginary pupil from before birth to adulthood in accordance with Rousseau's principle of the natural goodness of man. Yet *Emile* is nonetheless as much, if not more, an education of the reader in that same system. In fact, Rousseau himself denied that *Emile* was intended to be an educational treatise, at

least not in any straightforward way. He even voiced surprise that anyone would have supposed the work was an educational manual meant to be put into practice. In reply to a correspondent who expressed skepticism about its pedagogical methods, for example, Rousseau explained: "You state quite correctly that it is impossible to make an Emile. But I cannot believe that you took the book that bears this name for a veritable treatise on education. It is a quite philosophical work on the principle put forward by the author in his other works that man is naturally good."[1] Likewise, in the *Dialogues*, the Frenchman describes *Emile* as "much read, little understood, and ill-appreciated," and he characterizes the work as "nothing but a treatise on the original goodness of man, destined to show how vice and error, foreign to his constitution, enter it from outside and imperceptibly change him" (*Dialogues*, *CW*, 1:213).

Rousseau cannot be entirely serious here, for certainly *Emile* is presented as a pedagogical treatise, and on one level, so it is. Indeed, one suspects that Rousseau believes that if many of the practices he preaches were put into effect, child rearing would be the better for it. Think of the moral revolution he predicts would occur if mothers once again deigned to nurse their children: "From the correction of this single abuse would soon result a general reform; nature would soon have reclaimed its rights. Let women once again become mothers, men will soon become fathers and husbands again" (*Emile*, 46).[2] Later editions of his works would testify to the fashion he inspired by featuring in the frontispiece a woman nursing her infant. Nonetheless, even if we do take *Emile* to be a pedagogical project, we still have to be persuaded of the principle of the natural goodness of man that grounds and guides its educational practices. On a more general and higher level, and regardless of its status as an educational treatise, therefore, *Emile* offers an education of the reader. As Janie Vanpée notes, "The reading of this work might constitute an education in itself. . . . By virtue of its discursive presentation and its pedagogical subject, the text confers a special status upon the reader. He is not just any reader coming to terms with any text; he is a reader cast in the role of pupil to the text's role of master."[3]

In this chapter and the following three I examine how the form of *Emile* as a treatise-novel and the rhetorical techniques Rousseau employs in it constitute an educational program for the reader. In the previous two chapters I examined the rhetorical strategies he uses to persuade and educate the reader of the two *Discourses*. The hybrid genre he adopts in *Emile* enables him to use a wider variety of literary techniques, or to use them more persistently. These techniques, such as shifting narrative voices, ironic distance, reliable and unreliable nar-

rators, characters with various attributes, and so on, are more familiar from novels and other "literary" genres. They are therefore more at home, so to speak, in *Emile*, and they provide Rousseau with a wide range of ways of constructing narratives and of interacting with his reader. As noted in the introduction to this book, my analysis is inspired in part by the "reader response" approach in literary criticism, and in this light Iser's examination of the "implied reader" of the novel form is helpful for understanding Rousseau's strategy. Iser argues that a central purpose of the novel is to challenge the reader to examine his or her own world in light of alternative world presented in the novel, which is at once similar to the reader's world—and hence "realistic"—and yet different. To repeat: "What was presented in the novel led to a specific effect: namely, to involve the reader in the world of the novel and so help him to understand it—and ultimately his own world—more clearly," he explains. Readers are therefore "forced to take an active part in the composition of the novel's meaning, which revolves around a basic divergence from the familiar."[4] Or, as Rousseau himself writes in one of his many confrontations with the reader: "It makes very little difference to me if I have written a romance [or novel—*roman*]. A fair romance it is indeed, the romance of human nature. If it is to be found only in this writing, is that my fault? This ought to be the history of my species. You who deprave it, it is you who make a romance of my book" (416).

In the introduction I characterized Rousseau's philosophy as essentially pedagogical in form and content, and nowhere is this most evident than in *Emile*. The various rhetorical and literary devices he employs in the work are part of a strategy of engaging the reader in the educational process, not just the education of the imaginary pupil of the work but that of the reader. Harvey offers an insightful characterization of the process when she describes Rousseau's multilevel discourse in the work, sometimes attending to his pupil, sometimes to the reader: "Sometimes they occur simultaneously with the same message being directed to the would-be tutor of a would-be pupil, as well as to the reader, whose concerns extend beyond a particular pedagogical situation to the philosophical issues of pedagogy, and to philosophy ultimately as pedagogy." Rather than writing in "a simple, univocal fashion," she explains, Rousseau moves the reader to "a higher and deeper level of understanding" through silences, challenges, and other methods: "He does not tell all, explicitly, he warns us and, hence, the layering is to be seen as part of our own pedagogical puzzle."[5] In what follows, I will examine the challenges Rousseau poses over the course of his educational treatise-novel.

I begin by examining the prefatory paratextual apparatus of *Emile*

and how Rousseau there commences the education of the reader. I focus in particular on his argument that others have not seen the children before their eyes properly and his claim that the fact that he does not "see as do other men," that what will be taken initially as "a visionary's dreams about education" (34), enables him to reveal the truth about human nature, hitherto hidden behind appearances. I then turn to his decision to adopt an imaginary pupil in order to avoid "getting lost in visions" (51) and therewith his choice of a hybrid treatise-novel genre for *Emile*. Here I especially attend to how he stages comparisons between "my pupil" and "your pupil" in order to educate his reader in the proper way of seeing human nature and development and to test the reader's progress. I pursue this theme of testing the reader by examining the stories Rousseau relates, some concerning Emile and some concerning other pupils, stories that challenge the reader to identify whether the lessons illustrated in these stories actually involve Emile ("my pupil") or are appropriate for him in light of principle of the natural goodness of man. I then examine a series of stories in which the question is instead whether the apologue or moral of the story Rousseau provides is apt or inapt, an issue raised in his analysis of La Fontaine's fable as being inappropriate for his pupil and as having an inapt apologue. My aim throughout these analyses is less to offer novel interpretations of these various stories and lessons than to illustrate how Rousseau challenges the reader to ask these questions in the first place and thereby to make progress in adopting Rousseau's perspective guided by the principle of the natural goodness of man.

Seeing Children Properly

In the previous chapters on the two *Discourses*, I began with the complex paratextual apparatus of the works. *Emile* has a comparatively modest paratextual apparatus, limited to a title page, frontispiece, preface, and an "Explanations of the Illustrations" for the prefatory material. There are also a fair number of footnotes added to the main text, some original and some added in a later edition. The most interesting structural features of *Emile* are instead within the text itself, especially the explicitly separate subsections imbedded in the work: the religious teaching of the "Profession of Faith of the Savoyard Vicar," the discussion of female education in "Sophie, or the Woman," and the political doctrine in "On Travel." In subsequent chapters I will examine these subsections and their role in the text. Likewise, I will devote the next chapter to the frontispiece and the other illustrations included in the work and the

role they play in the education of the reader. Here I limit myself to a few remarks on the title page and preface to examine how the work is presented to the reader.

Title Page

The title page includes the title, identification of the author, and an epigraph. As already noted, the hybrid treatise-novel has a hybrid title: *Emile, or On Education*. Emile is a proper name, and as we know, Rousseau will adopt an imaginary pupil named Emile to illustrate his educational method, so the title is eponymous. "On Education" announces the subject, or putative subject, of the work. Rousseau's use of a hybrid title, and especially one with "or" separating the primary title and the secondary or alternative or supplementary title, follows a common practice of his time. Think, for example, of "Zadig, or On Destiny" (1747) and "Candide, or On Optimism" (1759), both by Voltaire. Or Rousseau's own novel *Julie, or The New Heloise*, a work to which the author referred variously as either *Julie* or *The New Heloise*. Rousseau also refers to his work alternatively as *Emile* (e.g., in the *Confessions*) or his "educational treatise" (e.g., in the *Letter to Beaumont*), although never, to the best of my knowledge, as *On Education*. The hybrid title may also evoke the traditional titles of Platonic dialogues, for example *The Symposium, or On Love* or *The Republic, or On Justice*. Rousseau himself hints at his Platonic model near the beginning of *Emile* when he writes: "Do you want to get an idea of public education? Read Plato's *Republic*. It is not at all a political work, as think those who judge books only by their titles. It is the most beautiful educational treatise ever written" (40). Our author may be warning the reader not to judge his book by the title alone.

What about his choice of name for the title and the pupil: Emile? Later in the work, when Rousseau conjures an imaginary beloved for his pupil, he at least gives a hint as to the choice of her name: "'Let us call your future beloved *Sophie*. The name Sophie augers well. If the girl whom you choose does not bear it, she will at least be worthy of bearing it'" (329).[6] Sophie is associated with wisdom (*sophia*), so perhaps she is somehow wise.[7] He offers no such explanation for Emile, simply introducing him by name: "But as for the rules which might need proofs, I have applied them all to my Emile" (51). I suggest that he chose "Emile" because of the root sense of his name: to emulate (*émuler*, *aemulor*). Emile himself is said to be no imitator: "But who in the world is less of an imitator than Emile?" (331). Nonetheless, Emile in some sense a model for the reader. My suggestion is based in part on the juxtaposition of the title page and frontispiece. Facing "Emile" on the title page is the

frontispiece depicting Thetis dipping her son in the Styx to render him invulnerable. As I will discuss in greater detail in the next chapter in my interpretation of the engravings for *Emile*, Rousseau aims to substitute a new exemplar for the classical hero represented by Achilles.

The title page identifies the author as "Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Citizen of Geneva." One perspective from which Rousseau invites the reader to approach *Emile*, then, is that of the citizen. As we have seen, Rousseau also identifies himself as a citizen on the title pages of the two *Discourses*, and we will see him do so in the *Social Contract* as well. Yet, to anticipate, what Rousseau states about citizens at the outset of *Emile* makes this lens different from the more straightforwardly political perspective of the two *Discourses* or the *Social Contract*. In the same context, near the beginning of the work, in which he identifies Plato's *Republic* as an educational treatise and warns us not to judge books by their titles, he describes the full and genuine citizenship of such ancient polities as Rome and Sparta, only to proclaim that such citizenship is no longer possible: "Public instruction no longer exists and can no longer exist, because where there is no longer fatherland, there can no longer be citizens. These two words, *fatherland* and *citizen*, should be effaced from modern languages" (40). Rather than offering a work on public instruction, therefore, he will present a private education meant to produce a "man" instead of a "citizen." Why identify himself as a "Citizen of Geneva," then? One possibility, which I will suggest for now but explore later in the chapter on the *Social Contract*, is that the absence of true fatherlands and citizens, which requires one to turn to private education, is itself a political situation. If so, in this respect the "Citizen of Geneva" is offering a critical commentary on modern politics.

Finally, the title page includes an epigraph identified as coming from Seneca's "On Anger" (*De Ira*): "We are sick with evils that can be cured; and nature, having brought us forth sound, itself helps us if we wish to be improved" (Sanabilibus aegrotamus malis; ipsaque nos in rectum genitos natura, si emendari velimus, iuvat).[8] The reader is thereby alerted of the importance of anger for Rousseau's argument, and also of the centrality of the question of the source of the evils from which we suffer, a critical issue given his argument concerning man's natural goodness. The choice of anger is particularly apt in light of the figure across from the title page: Achilles. Once again, I will examine the frontispiece in greater detail in the following chapter, but for now it suffices to note that Rousseau is already indicating to the reader that this and other passions ascribed to the epic hero are not natural. As we shall see momentarily, anger is an important theme in Rousseau's narrative, and part of the challenge he poses to the reader in adducing

examples of children's behavior is to discriminate between natural and unnatural passions.

Preface

The preface to *Emile* combines the functions we saw in the prefaces and exordiums to the two *Discourses* of announcing the subject and the author's qualifications. Unlike the two *Discourses*, *Emile* is not presented as a spoken work and is instead explicitly characterized by Rousseau as a written one, so an exordium would not be appropriate. The main thrust of the preface is to diminish expectations concerning the author and what he will have to say. "This collection of reflections and observations, disordered and almost incoherent, was begun to gratify a good mother who knows how to think," he begins. "I had at first planned only a monograph [*mémoire*] of a few pages. My subject drew me on in spite of myself, and this monograph imperceptibly became a sort of opus [*ouvrage*], too big, doubtless, for what it contains, but too small for the matter it treats" (33). Although the subtitle suggests that we are reading an educational treatise, Rousseau is oddly elusive about his "subject" and the "matter" his book treats. He will not say much about the importance of a "good education" or about how the current one is bad, for these matters are obvious; but he suggests that the "art of forming men" is both the most useful subject and one that is still fresh (33). If his book is devoted to this art, it is much more capacious and ambitious than a mere educational treatise.

Adults begin as children, but, Rousseau proclaims, "childhood is unknown." Although he frames the question of what children are capable of learning *as* children, his main point is that we mistakenly see the man in the child. In terms of his system of the natural goodness of man, this would mean that we falsely assume that the characteristics of men as they are currently formed are natural, that we mistake appearance for reality with regard to human nature. Rousseau's emphasis is therefore on making correct observations of children before they are formed and corrupted. This is the "study" to which he has devoted himself, he explains, "so that even though my entire method were chimerical and false, my *observations* could still be of profit. I may have *seen* very poorly what must be done, but I do believe I have clearly *seen* the subject on which one must work. Begin, then, by studying your pupils better. For most assuredly you do not know [or recognize—*connoissez*] them at all" (33–34; emphasis added). We must learn to see children properly.

But how to observe children before they acquire the passions and

faculties by which they are corrupted, given how quickly such faults insinuate themselves? Rousseau asks his readers to see beyond the examples before their eyes, to discriminate between appearance and reality. If they do, they will see his system of the natural goodness of man. But he predicts that they will not be immediately persuaded: "As to what will be called the systematic part, which is here nothing but the march of nature, it is the point that will most put off the reader, and doubtless it is here that I will be attacked." What will "put off" or "disconcert" (*déroutera*) the reader is also what will "reroute" or "divert" him (*dé-routera*) into another path of thinking if he accepts the challenge: "It will be believed that what is being read is less an educational treatise than a visionary's dreams about education. What is to be done about it? It is on the basis not of others' ideas that I write, but on that of my own. I do not see as do other men. I have long been reproached for that" (34). Rousseau immediately commences his dialogue with the skeptical reader. His initial dampening of expectations concerning his qualifications as an author is therefore ironic in the Socratic sense of presenting himself as less worthy and less knowledgeable than he truly is.

Finally, before turning to the main text, given the visual language in the preface to which I have drawn attention—"a visionary's dreams," "I do not see as do other men," and so on—it is significant that immediately following the preface and immediately preceding the main text we encounter the Explanations of the Illustrations. The expressly visual education of the reader through these illustrations and their dialectical relationship with the text will be the subject of the following chapter; but as we turn now to the main text, we will see Rousseau continue to use visual language and imagery.

An Imaginary Pupil to Prevent Getting Lost in Visions

Rousseau admits in the preface that he sees things differently, and this admission carries with it an implicit accusation of the reader for misapprehending the world. He commences book I with a statement about the world: "Everything is good, as it leaves the hands of the Author of things, everything degenerates in the hands of man" (37). This opening statement evokes Rousseau's system of the natural goodness of man and his corruption in society. The goodness of nature is arguably evident from the order of the natural world, but the alleged goodness of human nature is not so evident, for what we currently see before our eyes is what "the hands of man" have disfigured.[9] Recall in this light Rousseau's declaration in the *Discourse on Inequality* that he has "demonstrated" that man is naturally good, a declaration that follows

his account of a "famous author" drawing the conclusion that man is wicked because he was observing the corrupted civil man instead of natural man (*Inequality*, n. IX, 127). The reader of *Emile* is assumed to share the same mistaken perspective as this author, and Rousseau must persuade the reader to adopt a different perspective.

The first reader Rousseau explicitly addresses in his work is a mother, echoing his claim in the preface that he began the work to "gratify a good mother who knows how to think" (33). This overture occurs in the third paragraph of the main text after his opening claim about everything being good as it comes from the hands of the author of things and its degeneration in the hands of man and then his explanation that we cannot simply let nature take its course once we are in society because of the prejudices and social institutions in which we find ourselves submerged. "It is to you [*toi*] that I address myself, tender and foresighted mother," he writes, urging her to keep her nascent "shrub" away from "the impact of human opinions" (37–38). In order to accomplish this task, the mother must be able to recognize "human opinions" as opinions or prejudices, to discriminate what comes from nature or its author and what comes from man, to distinguish between appearance and reality. Rousseau will soon discuss how mothers are often mistaken in how they raise their children because of shortsighted maternal tenderness (46–48). Mothers have to have their vision corrected; they need to adopt the lenses through which Rousseau educates them so that they in turn can educate their children in the same way. Over the course of *Emile* Rousseau will address himself to various readers: mothers, fathers, tutors, authors, readers, and most often an unspecified "you," whether *tu* or *vous*. What is common to all of these various readers is that they, too, need to learn to see along with Rousseau.[10]

Rousseau adds a footnote, the first in the work, to the phrase in the main text where he offers a familiar address to a mother, and in this note he identifies another readership: would-be authors of treatises on education. The footnotes are one of *Emile*'s paratextual apparatuses, and rather than presenting an extended analysis of the footnotes I will limit myself to a few observations on the occasion of the first. The footnotes to *Emile* by no means have a single purpose, but perhaps most commonly they draw attention to the work as a published text and to Rousseau in his role of author. The first footnote is one such example. In the note he explains there that the first education of children incontestably belongs to mothers and he therefore offers advice to another class of readers: "Always speak [*Parlez*], then, preferably to women in your [*vos*] treatises on education" (37 n.). Other footnotes later in *Emile* provide quotations from other authors and identify the source of quotations in the text. Still others are used by Rousseau to point readers to his other works, for example the *Social Contract* (85 n. and 462 n.), the *Letter to d'Alembert* (128 n.), the *Discourse on Inequality* (258 n.), and the (posthumously published) essay *Principles of Melody* (340 n.). Perhaps most interestingly, in his role as the alleged editor of the "Profession of Faith" he adds footnotes to the document supposedly transcribed by an unknown author, much as he does in *Julie*, a subject to which I will return in chapter 5. In sum, through these various techniques, Rousseau frequently calls attention in the footnotes to the written character of the text.

To return to the main text: in our present condition the demands of nature and of society are in conflict, Rousseau explains, and therefore we are in conflict with ourselves. The current education that forms the men we have before our eyes has created beings who are evil, or at least conflicted and enervated, a type Rousseau terms the *bourgeois* (40). Rousseau seeks an education that will form a human being who is not in conflict, an education that is somehow in accordance with nature. What Rousseau means here by *nature*, an issue he directly confronts in this context, is a complicated affair and beyond the scope of the present investigation. Instead of taking the "double men" before our eyes as representing human nature, if we follow Rousseau we will see them as products of education, broadly conceived, as artificial and not natural. Doing so, we are prepared to entertain how we might produce a unified human being through a different education.

Rousseau presents the reader with two such possibilities: the "man" and the "citizen." Since we do not have these beings before our eyes, we must imagine them. As for the "citizen," Rousseau depicts this being by recounting two stories drawn from Plutarch about the virtuous Spartan male and female citizens and then warns the reader that they are now unrecognizable: "This has little relation, it seems to me, to the men we know [or recognize: *connoissons*]" (40). The examples of ancient citizens illustrate how civic education "denatures" man (and woman) by transforming him (and her) into a being whose identity is defined by citizenship. However, as already noted when discussing Rousseau's self-presentation as the "Citizen of Geneva," he immediately dismisses the possibility of creating true citizens in modern times. That leaves the "education of nature" that will produce a "man," or perhaps a "human being" (*homme*) if the term is not gender specific. The product of this education also has to be seen imaginatively. "If perchance the double object we set for ourselves," that is, of making a being who is good for himself and for others, "could be joined in a single one by removing the contradictions of man, a great obstacle to his happiness would be

removed. In order to judge of this, he would have to be *seen* wholly formed: his inclinations would have to be *observed*, his progress *seen*, his development followed. In a word, it would be necessary to know [*connoitre*] natural man. I believe that one will have made a few steps in these researches when one has read this writing" (41; emphasis added). Rousseau's emphasis here is on a progression—"progress," "development," "steps"—in the process of visualization on the part of his reader through the course of reading the work.

In order to make his reader see a natural man, to make them accept his "visions" as real, Rousseau decides to illustrate his educational method by giving himself an imaginary pupil and by taking on the role of an imaginary governor. In doing so, he employs for the first time in *Emile* a pattern of rhetorical devices that we will see repeated throughout the work. Namely, he makes a programmatic statement related to his doctrine of the natural goodness of man and, immediately beforehand or afterward, stages a comparison between two examples of children's behavior, one representing the product of his natural education and the other representing the product of ordinary corrupt education. We are already familiar with a version of the device of comparing examples for a pedagogical purpose from the *Discourse on Inequality* and the repeated comparisons there between natural man and civil man.

The occasion for the first use in *Emile* of this rhetorical pattern is the subject of children crying, a substantively significant example to which we shall see him return. "A child cries at birth," he begins, and then remarks on how we react to this crying and the effects of our actions: "Either we do what pleases him, or we exact from him what pleases us. Either we submit to his whims, or we submit him to ours. . . . Thus his first ideas are those of domination and servitude." Then the programmatic statement: "It is thus that we fill up his young heart at the outset with the passions which we later impute to nature and that, after having taken efforts to make him wicked, we complain about finding him so." The child so raised has had unnatural passions instilled in him, making him a "factitious being," at once "slave and tyrant," and viewing him as natural we deplore our condition. Then the comparison of two pupils: "This is a mistake. He is the man of our whims; the man of nature is differently constituted" (48).

Since the child before our eyes whom we take to be natural is in fact artificial or "factitious," Rousseau must help us see or imagine the "man of nature." At this point in the text, therefore, he introduces the novelistic component of *Emile*. The "man of nature" needs a preceptor who understands the true "march of nature," as Rousseau phrases it in the preface when speaking of the "systematic part" of his work that will be

met with disbelief (34). Who better than Rousseau himself? Acknowledging his incapacity for the role, Rousseau the author will imagine himself as "Jean-Jacques," a tutor who does possess the requisite ability (50–51). Then he gives himself an imaginary pupil. His solution to getting us to accept a reality hidden from our eyes is thoroughly paradoxical:

> I have hence chosen to give myself an imaginary pupil. . . . This method appears to me useful to prevent an author who distrusts himself from getting lost in visions; for when he deviates from ordinary practice, he has only to make a test of his own practice on his pupil. He will soon sense, or the reader will sense for him, whether he follows the progress of childhood and the movements natural to the human heart. (50–51)

In short: he will make his imaginary pupil the test case for the "vision" he has been able to see because he does not see like other men.

The paradox of Rousseau's proceeding was not lost on one of his critics, Johann Heinrich Samuel Formey, whom Rousseau took seriously enough to respond to in notes he added to a later edition of *Emile*. Commenting on this passage, Formey begins a complaint that he will echo throughout his examination of the work: "Here the chimera of the project on which this work turns becomes manifest . . . he does an act of creation rather than of invention, and one can no longer continue reading his work except based on a principle of curiosity and amusement, as one reads Utopia and other imaginary republics."[11] As it seems only fair to consider how at least one contemporary read *Emile*, I will make some further references in the notes to Formey's objections of this sort. For now it suffices to say that Formey takes *Emile* to be what it appears to be on the surface, an educational treatise, and that his protestations often concern the unrealizability or inappropriateness of the educational program. He might very well stand for the skeptical reader to whom Rousseau will often address himself in the work. At any rate, though, Formey does not consider the possibility that *Emile* is instead meant to be an education of the reader.

On this very point, and to return to his adoption of an imaginary pupil, Rousseau invites the reader to test the veracity of the methods used on his pupil independently of himself as author: ". . . or the reader will sense for him." The exercise of this prerogative is in fact one of the primary lessons in the education of the reader. Rousseau's imaginary pupil and his vision of human nature are only persuasive if we accept his teaching concerning "the movements natural to the human heart." His imaginary pupil is depicted according to this true vision of human nature, but he will be unlike the children we ordinarily have before our eyes. In order to instantiate this imaginary pupil, Rousseau fashions

him out of the flesh and blood born of pen and paper: "I have been content with setting down the principles whose truth everyone should sense. But as for the rules which might need proofs, I have applied them all to my Emile or to other examples" (51). Emile and "other" examples.[12] As just remarked, Rousseau typically juxtaposes important programmatic statements concerning the fundamental principles of his thought with comparisons between "my pupil," who exists only in the mind's eye, and "your pupil," the child actually visible to the reader. The education of the reader advances as he becomes more persuaded by the "reality" of the imaginary pupil through these comparisons. Part of this education will be to learn to differentiate between those examples. The distance between Emile and other examples will grow as the work progresses:

> The result of this procedure is that at first I have spoken little of my Emile, because my first educational maxims, although contrary to those which are established, are so evident that it is difficult for any reasonable man to refuse his consent to them. But in proportion as I advance, my pupil, differently conducted than yours, is no longer an ordinary child. He requires a way of life special to him. Then he appears more frequently on the scene, and toward the last times I no longer let him out of sight for a moment. (51)

Hence *Emile* becomes more novelistic as it progresses. The rationale for this procedure is in part that his imaginary pupil becomes more and more unlike the children we have before our eyes. If he succeeds, Rousseau will have educated his reader to accept the character in his educational novel as a true depiction of human nature.

Rousseau's Choice of a Hybrid Genre for Emile

In order to highlight Rousseau's method of composition in *Emile*, it would be instructive at this point to consider the hybrid genre he chose for his work. This choice is underscored by how the final version of his work differs from the earlier version.[13] The earlier version, the so-called Favre Manuscript, covers approximately the same material as the first three books of the final version. The first version of Rousseau's educational treatise is in large measure just that: an educational treatise. The striking feature of the first version of *Emile* is what it lacks in comparison to the final version: Emile. Or almost so. Toward the end of the earlier version, Emile is suddenly introduced; he becomes the pupil through what little remains of the text of the manuscript. This point in the text of the original version is equivalent of about half way through book III of the final version.[14] It is as though Rousseau suddenly thought of the

novelistic form he might give the work, ceased writing, and then began anew. Which is probably just what he did.[15]

Rousseau's decision to alter the form of his work confronts us with the question of why he did so. The closest student of the genesis and composition of *Emile*, Peter Jimack, suggests that Rousseau "seems to have been involuntarily led to identify himself with the governor and his examples," turning to the novel form to bring to life his imaginary pupil and then awkwardly inserting him into the original text. He further suggests that Rousseau himself also became confused in his own role as "I" (*je* or *moi*) in the text, with author and imaginary tutor becoming hopelessly jumbled.[16] In response to such a reading, which privileges the psychological state of the author and the process of composition over its content, Patrick Coleman correctly argues: "In the context of *Emile* as it comes to us, that is, in its hybrid form, we must ask for whose sake examples are adduced and by which 'moi,' before we can locate any possible contradiction."[17] Perhaps as much as 80 percent of the original material is incorporated into the final version, often without any change, but in the final version Rousseau interweaves this material with stories of Emile and the tutor Jean-Jacques and also of other children, examples often also supposedly involving the historic Jean-Jacques Rousseau rather than the imagined tutor. Another change he made in the final version is important for the present analysis: none of the visual language and imagery that I have highlighted in the preface and the beginning of book I exists in the original version. It would seem, therefore, that in recasting the work Rousseau shifted his focus squarely to the education of the reader through a series of rhetorical devices, often visual in nature, including foremost his imaginary pupil.

An indication of Rousseau's authorial control over what he does in the final version comes from the hints of the literary devices he would ultimately adopt that are present only in nascent form in the Favre Manuscript and how he developed these devices in the final version to both substantive and rhetorical effect. An interesting example for the present purposes comes early in the manuscript and just after recommending that we harden the physical constitution of children—"Steep them in the waters of the Styx"—which in the final version is just before Rousseau first introduces his imaginary pupil. In the earlier version, Rousseau describes the results of the usual education given by coddling women and pretentious tutors and how the product of this education—"this child, slave and tyrant"—is "cast out into the world, showing there his wretchedness, he becomes the basis for deploring that of humanity. This is a mistake. He is the man of our whims; the man of nature is differently constituted."[18] Rousseau here hints both at

a philosophical position, the natural goodness of man, and at a device he will use to persuade his reader of that position, asking the reader to visualize a comparison between two children. Yet both the philosophical position and the rhetorical device are made more explicit in the final version. As for the philosophical position, in the final version Rousseau strengthens the sense of the earlier version with a more programmatic statement: "It is thus that we fill up his young heart at the outset with the passions which later we impute to nature and that, after having taken efforts to make him wicked, we complain about finding him so" (48). As for the device he uses to persuade his reader of this statement, it is slightly after this same point in the final version of the text that Rousseau introduces Emile (51). Emile thus becomes the more embodied version of the "man of nature" we are to compare to the "man of our whims." Finally, and related, it is also in this same context in both the earlier and final versions of the work that Rousseau alludes to the story of Thetis and Achilles ("Steep them in the waters of the Styx"). Whatever his intentions when he began the first draft of the work, it is this story that will serve as the frontispiece to *Emile*, and by introducing his imaginary pupil at this point in the final version, Rousseau invites us to compare Emile and Achilles. He therefore prepares another lesson in the visual education of the reader.

In sum, then, Rousseau appears to have rethought his presentation and in particular the way in which he would persuade his reader through an imaginary pupil and comparisons to other examples. This rethinking resulted in the creation of Emile himself, the most important systematic change in the final version of the work that would eventually come to bear the title *Emile*.

"My Pupil" versus "Your Pupil"

Returning to the final version of *Emile*, I have suggested that the comparisons Rousseau stages between his imaginary pupil and ordinary children, often presented with programmatic statements concerning the natural goodness of man, are part of the educational program of inducing the reader to adopt his perspective and of testing the reader's progress. I have already examined the first instance of his employment of this technique, the passage in book I concerning the crying of infants that appears right before he introduces Emile. A few more examples of how Rousseau juxtaposes examples of "my pupil" and "your pupil" from later in the work will help illustrate this repeated testing.

A subject of particular importance for the reader in learning how to read the book Rousseau has written is learning to read and write, a subject that arises in book II. After discussing how Emile will be led to learn to read by appealing to his present interest, for example his receiving invitations to parties, Rousseau turns to writing: "Shall I speak now of writing? No. I am ashamed of playing with this kind of foolishness in an educational treatise" (117). Our author approaches his work with a strong dose of irony, destabilizing the reading experience and thereby preparing a challenge to the reader: "The more I insist on my inactive method, the more I sense objections becoming stronger. If your [*vôtre*] pupil learns nothing from you, he will learn from others. If you do not forestall error by means of truth, he will learn lies. The prejudices you are afraid of giving him, he will receive from everything around him." Rousseau then invites the skeptical reader to enter into dialogue with him, only to refuse to do so: "It seems to me that I could easily answer that. But why always answers? If my method by itself answers objections, it is good. If it does not answer them, it is worthless. I shall proceed."[19] The ensuing discussion seems to be an illustration of the method and its results: "If, according to the plan I have begun to outline, you [*vous*] follow rules directly contrary to the established ones . . . you will find him capable of perception, memory, and even reasoning. This is nature's order." On the contrary, if "you" follow the opposite method, you will not achieve these ends: "If you are only a pedant, it is not worth the effort to read me" (117–18). Rousseau alternates invitations and refusals to his reader as a would-be tutor, depending on whether the reader accepts or rejects his lead.[20]

Having interacted with his reader, Rousseau now stages a comparison of the pupils produced by following these divergent paths, pupils whom he characterizes as the oafish peasant and the sagacious savage: "Learned preceptor, let us see which of our two pupils resembles the savage and which the peasant." Of course, the result is as expected.[21] Having made the comparison, Rousseau returns to his addressee: "Young teacher, I am preaching a difficult art to you, that of governing without precepts and doing everything by doing nothing" (119). Slightly afterward we get the now-expected programmatic statement: "All these practices seem difficult because one does not really consider them, but at bottom they ought not be. I have a right to assume that you possess the enlightenment necessary for exercising the vocation you have chosen. I have to assume that you know the natural development of the human heart, that you know how to study man and the individual" (121). Differently put, the reader as tutor must have been persuaded by the philosophical system of the natural goodness of man and has thereby learned to observe children (and men) correctly—precisely the substantive and methodological challenges Rousseau raises in the preface to *Emile*.

Rousseau admits the methodological hurdle to his argument near the outset of book IV, a portion of the text rich with programmatic statements about the character and limits of the natural passions, natural goodness, and so on. Previously limited to his own individuality, his pupil's awakening, adolescent-onset passions causes him to extend his relations to others and become a fully moral being. Directing these passions to prevent their corruption requires careful "observations," Rousseau explains: "These observations are difficult because in order to make them, we must reject the examples that are before our eyes and seek for those in which the successive developments take place according to the order of nature" (220). Of course, that example is his imaginary pupil.

If the reader visualizes Emile, he will be able to discern the moment in the child's development when he is capable of truly identifying and commiserating with his fellow human beings: "If this moment is not easy to notice in your children, whom do you blame for it? . . . But look at my Emile" (222). In other words, the reader must reject the examples before his eyes and "look at" the imaginative example Rousseau has portrayed. Then, after propounding "two or three" maxims for properly cultivating pity through exposure to suffering (another test of the reader, for he explicitly enumerates three maxims), Rousseau returns to the comparison of pupils: "More than one reader will doubtless reproach me for forgetting my first resolve and the constant happiness I had promised my pupil. . . . I promised to make him happy, not to appear to be. Is it my fault if you, always dupes of appearance, take it for reality?" Of course, teaching his reader to discriminate between and appearance and reality, truth and artifice, is one of Rousseau's main pedagogical goals. "Let us take two men, emerging from their first education and entering into society by two directly opposite paths," he continues. The first is thrust into society with the ordinary education: "You see him attentive, eager, curious. His initial admiration strikes you. You take him to be satisfied; but look at the condition of his soul. You believe he is enjoying himself; I believe he is suffering" (227). And somewhat later: "This is your pupil. Let us see mine" (229). Needless to say, Rousseau's pupil is happy, and having elaborated on the condition of his soul, the author returns to the comparison: "I cannot prevent myself from imagining on the face of the young man of whom I have previously spoken something impertinent, sugary, affected, which displeases, which repels plain people; and on that of my young man an interesting and simple expression that reveals satisfaction and true serenity of soul, inspires esteem and confidence" Having said enough on this matter to persuade "a reasonable reader," he concludes: "I therefore return to my method"

(230). In short, the "reasonable reader" has been persuaded by Rousseau that his imaginary pupil is somehow "true" and the children before the reader's eyes are correspondingly "false."

Later in book IV Rousseau stages one of the most aggressive confrontations with the reader. The context for this challenge is his explanation of how nascent *amour-propre*, which usually takes the corrupt form of the selfish pride the reader might assume is natural to human beings, can be healthily directed with the proper education: "Let us extend *amour-propre* to other beings, we shall transform it into a virtue, and there is no man's heart in which this virtue does not have its root." Self-love can be generalized to become the love of justice, he explains, and argues with reference to Emile: "The true principles of the just, the true models of the beautiful, all the moral relations of beings, all the ideas of order are imprinted on his understanding" (252–53). Having made these claims, he turns to his readers:

> I go forward, attracted by the force of things but without gaining credibility in the judgment of my readers. For a long while they have seen me in the land of chimeras. As for me, I always see them in the land of prejudices. . . . I know that they persist in imagining only what they see, and therefore they will take the young man whom I evoke to be an imaginary and fantastic being because he differs from those with whom they compare him. . . . This is not the man of man, it is the man of nature. Assuredly he must be very alien to their eyes.
>
> In beginning this work, I supposed nothing that everyone cannot observe just as I do, because there is a point—the birth of man—from which we all equally begin. But the more we go forward, I to cultivate nature and you to deprave it, the further we get from each other. (253)

This dialogue continues with Rousseau delivering imagined speeches of disbelief on the part of the reader, for example: "'Nothing of what you suppose exists,'" to which he replies, "I beg those judges who are so quick to censure to consider that I know what they are saying here just as well as they do, that I have probably reflected on it longer, that I have no interest in foisting anything on them." He asks the judgmental reader to examine carefully the constitution of "man," to see how powerful the effects of different educations are, and then compare "my education with the effects I attribute to it." He writes off the reader who thinks he has gone astray in his reasoning: "I shall have nothing to respond" (254).

Rousseau nonetheless does not terminate his dialogue with the more receptive reader. Instead, he develops the method of comparative observation he prescribes to those who would judge him hastily. The method he describes is useful for understanding his philosophical procedure in

Emile, and elsewhere, of investigating human nature. It is also revealing with regard to his training of the reader to see like he does. Interestingly and paradoxically, given the fact that he has given himself an imaginary pupil, he defends himself by appealing to his "observations":

> What makes me more assertive—and, I believe, more to be excused for being so—is that, instead of yielding to the systematic spirit, I grant as little as possible to reasoning and I trust only observation. I found myself not on what I have imagined, but on what I have seen. It is true that I have not restricted my experience to the compass of a city's walls or to a single class of people. But after having compared as many ranks and peoples as I could see in a life spent observing them, I have eliminated as artificial what belonged to one people and not to another, to one station and not to another, and have regarded as incontestably belonging to man only what was common to all, at whatever age, in whatever rank, and in whatever nation. (254)

Rousseau's claim makes sense if he—and his reader—has learned to observe properly, to distinguish the natural from the artificial, whether in the mind's eye of observing the imaginary pupil or in the actual eye of observing existing human beings.[22] Having outlined his method, he returns to the reader: "Now if in accordance with this method you follow a young man from childhood . . . whom do you think he will most resemble—my pupil or yours?" (254). With that said, he returns to his pupil.

Finally, still later in book IV, Rousseau provides one of his last express confrontations with the reader: "Reader, I am well aware that no matter what I do, you and I will never see my Emile with the same features. You will always picture him as similar to your young people." He then stages a dialogue between author and reader: "You will say, 'This dreamer always pursues his chimera. By giving us a pupil of his making, he not only forms him, he creates him, he pulls him out of his brain; and though he believes he is always following nature, he diverges from it at every instant.'" In reply: "I, comparing my pupil to yours, hardly find anything that they can have in common. Since they are reared so differently, it would almost be a miracle if Emile resembled yours in anything" (315). Once again, the comparison between pupils, "my pupil" versus "your pupil," is meant to educate the reader to see properly.

Cases of Mistaken Identity

The technique of staging comparisons between different children, including "my" pupil and "your" pupil, is relatively straightforward,

but Rousseau also employs more complicated methods to challenge the reader. One set of related techniques involves cases of mistaken identity. These include mistakes made in the observations of children, and especially cases in which Rousseau in his persona as author relates stories about errors he himself supposedly made in his persona as the historical Jean-Jacques Rousseau.[23] They also include stories in which Rousseau in his persona as the imaginary tutor, Jean-Jacques, relates lessons he gives Emile, leaving it to the reader to judge whether the lesson was appropriate or inappropriate for the imaginary pupil educated in accordance with the system of the natural goodness of man. This tripling of himself—author, tutor, and his supposedly historical self—is paralleled by his doubling of pupils, for example Emile and Jean-Jacques, the imaginary tutor, versus an ordinary child and Jean-Jacques Rousseau.[24] By splitting himself into these various personae, Rousseau not only interacts with different children in different ways, but interacts in different ways with the reader.

In this section, I examine Rousseau's use of these related techniques through a series of stories that are thematically related to one another by the subject of anger. As noted previously, Rousseau draws our attention to the importance of anger for his work by including an epigraph from Seneca's "On Anger" on the title page. The claim there is that our "ills," including anger, do not come from nature and can be cured, or rather prevented, through proper education. We should also recall that he sets up the introduction of his imaginary pupil (and a comparison to the angry Achilles) with the example of the master-slave dialectic between a crying child and a frustrated adult, concluding: "It is thus that we fill up his young heart at the outset with the passions which we later impute to nature and that, after having taken efforts to make him wicked, we complain about finding him so" (48). Anger is therefore substantively important for Rousseau's principle of the natural goodness of man and for the education of the reader in accordance with that principle.[25]

For Crying Out Loud

The first story to be examined involves a crying infant who becomes enraged after being slapped by his nurse. Instead of Jean-Jacques the governor we have Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and instead of Emile we have an ordinary child. "I shall never forget having seen one of these difficult criers," the narration begins. The difficult crier is struck by his nurse and is immediately quiet: "I believed he was intimidated. I said to myself, 'This will be a servile soul from which one will get nothing except by severity.' I was mistaken." Rather than being servile, the struck infant

was in fact angry: "A moment after came sharp screams; all the signs of the resentment, fury, and despair of his age were in his accents. . . . If I had doubted that the sentiment of the just and the unjust were innate in the heart of man, this example alone would have convinced me" (65–66).

This example is deceptively simple, and in fact deceptive. Indeed, directly after presenting it, Rousseau practically alerts us to the need to examine it more carefully: "This disposition of children to fury, spite, and anger requires extreme attentiveness" (66). Interpreting the example requires realizing that the "I" who reports witnessing this child and then draws the conclusion about the natural sentiment of justice and injustice is not necessarily the same "I"—Rousseau the author—who relates the story in his book. Or at least this may be the same "I" at two moments in time, perhaps pre- and post-illumination of Vincennes. Note that Rousseau as author states that the supposedly historical Jean-Jacques Rousseau was mistaken; if the tutor Jean-Jacques is seemingly infallible, Jean-Jacques Rousseau is fallible. The effect of relating his mistake through his historical persona is to disarm the reader, who can be excused for making the same mistake. Jean-Jacques Rousseau attributes resentment, fury, and despair to the child and allies these attributes to an innate sentiment of justice. Does Rousseau the author believe that children are naturally resentful, angry, and despairing? No. In fact, immediately after this story he counsels the reader to be wary of introducing these unnatural sentiments into the child and makes a programmatic statement about the natural goodness of man. He makes this statement against those philosophers who erringly explain children's behavior as a result of "natural vices: pride, the spirit of domination, *amour-propre*, the wickedness of man." He specifically cites Hobbes's claim that "the wicked man [is] a robust child" (67), but he might also have in mind Augustine, who interprets his crying as an infant as an incipient sign of sin.[26] Jean-Jacques Rousseau makes the same mistake as Hobbes and others in interpreting his observation of the child. In short, Rousseau the author does not agree with Jean-Jacques Rousseau as witness concerning the naturalness of anger and similar passions.

Does Rousseau as author agree with Jean-Jacques Rousseau that the child's behavior proves there is an innate sentiment of justice? This is a more complicated issue. To begin we might observe that the child's behavior is more accurately described as manifesting a sentiment of injustice, not justice, since he reacts to "the manifest intention of offending him" (66). The child's reaction is indignation, a form of anger. If anger is unnatural, then indignation is not natural. Related, such indignation requires recognizing intentionality or will, which Rousseau argues is beyond the infant's natural capacity. The angry infant has had

his passions and faculties prematurely awakened, and we can anticipate that he will become the little tyrant who leads us mistakenly to infer that human nature is wicked. Even if the root of a sentiment of injustice or justice is somehow innate, it requires development of the passions and faculties not present in the child raised according to the education of nature but evidently awakened in the corrupted child in the example.[27] Jean-Jacques Rousseau as witness is therefore at best half right.

A Mistaken Lesson? Planting the Seeds of Vice

The issues of anger and injustice arise in book II in a well-known story of Emile planting beans to learn his first lesson in property. This episode also tests the reader in a different way by challenging him to ask whether the lesson is in fact appropriate for the pupil. First a few words about the context. Book II is devoted to childhood, when the child gains consciousness of himself and "the life of the individual begins" (78). The desires and faculties "in the reserve of the depth of his soul" (80) now begin to develop. In this context, then, Rousseau apostrophizes the skeptical reader: "This is, you answer me, the time to correct man's bad inclinations." To which he responds: "And how will you prove to me that these bad inclinations, of which you claim you are curing him, do not come to him from your ill-considered care far more than from nature?" (79–80). Similarly, somewhat later in the same book Rousseau argues that the usual practice of reasoning with children in order to teach them their duties actually instills vice: "With each lesson that one wants to put into their heads before its proper time, a vice is planted in the depths of their hearts. Senseless teachers think they work wonders when they make children wicked in order to teach them what goodness is. And then they solemnly tell us, 'Such is man.' Yes, such is the man you have made." Then we once again see the pattern of comparisons of children followed by a programmatic statement. "I already see the startled reader judging this child by our children. He is mistaken," he writes, and then pronounces: "Let us set down as an incontestable maxim that the first movements of nature are always right. There is no original perversity in the human heart. There is not a single vice to be found in it of which it cannot be said how and whence it entered." The pedagogical implication of his argument is that the first education ought to be "purely negative," a formulation that he states "common readers" will find paradoxical: "It consists not at all in teaching virtue or truth but in securing the heart from vice and the mind from error" (92–93). The first step in assessing the story of planting beans is to ask whether or not it is an example of such "negative education."

The story of Emile tending his garden has been examined by many interpreters, most of whom have seen in it a Lockean lesson in appropriating property through labor.[28] This is surely correct with qualification, a point to which I will return. But by focusing narrowly on the story itself, interpreters have not attended to how its immediate context calls into question the appropriateness of the lesson and also the narrative status of the story itself. The story is prepared by a warning to readers in their role as would-be tutors: "Zealous masters, be simple, discreet, restrained; never hasten to act except to prevent others from acting.... On this earth, out of which nature has made man's first paradise, dread exercising the tempter's function by wanting to give innocence the knowledge of good and evil" (96). We could hardly ask for a more blatant warning before a story about a garden from the philosopher of the natural goodness of man than an allusion to the Garden of Eden.

After this warning, and once again in preparation of the story of Emile and his garden, Rousseau turns to the subject of anger. He imagines "my little Emile" witnessing two neighbors arguing and saying to one of them "in a tone of commiseration": "'My good woman, you are sick. I am so sorry about it.'" This sally, he says, "will surely not remain without effect on the spectators or perhaps on the actresses" (97). A few things should be noted about this vignette. First, the remark about the "actresses" in particular indicates that it is staged, and we can anticipate that the story of planting beans is similarly staged. Second, it is unclear who the "I" is who speaks of "my little Emile." Is it Jean-Jacques the tutor or Rousseau the author? Third, there is likewise uncertainty over Emile, for he would lack the developed passions and faculties to feel commiseration, which Rousseau states in book IV only develops at adolescence according to the march of nature. The warning about zealous masters unwittingly corrupting their pupils, the subject of anger, and uncertainty concerning the identity of master and pupil all play a role in interpreting the tale of Emile and the bean sprouts. Finally, as he introduces his pupil to property rights, Rousseau warns the reader that the conventions of already-existing property are beyond the reach of children: "Readers, in this example [*cet exemple*] and in a hundred thousand others, I beg you to note how we stuff children's heads with words which have no meaning within their reach and then believe we have instructed them very well" (98). "This example" appears to be the immediately following story of Emile planting beans. Is it among the hundred thousand misapplied lessons of which Rousseau warns us?

The lesson involves going back to the origin of property: "The child, living in the country, will have gotten some notion of labor in the fields." Who is "the child"? Is it Emile? The child will naturally want to imitate

this gardening: "According to the principles previously established, I in no way oppose his desire." Who is "I"? The child "takes possession" of a plot by planting a bean in it and takes great joy in watching it grow. The master "I" explains that the plot belongs to the child because he has mixed his labor into it. One day they return to the plot to discover it has been torn up: "O what a sight! O pain! All the beans are rooted out, the plot is torn up, the very spot is unrecognizable. O what has become of my labor, my product, the sweet fruit of my care and my sweat? Who has stolen my goods? Who took my beans from me? This young heart is aroused. The first sentiment of injustice comes to shed its sad bitterness in it. Tears flow in streams. The grieving child fills the air with moans and cries. I partake of his pain, his indignation." After making inquiries, they discover that the gardener is responsible and imperiously summon him. But it turns out that the gardener, not the child, is the injured party, for the child has planted his "miserable beans" where the owner of the plot had planted Maltese melons—exquisite melons that, to make matters worse, he states he was going to share with the child. The child is both the unjust party and is less well-off to boot through his inconsiderate planting of beans. A dialogue ensues among "Jean-Jacques," "Robert," and "Emile." Robert protests that he has inherited, occupied, and worked the plot of land for a long time and notes that there is little fallow land left. Emile responds that he does not have a garden. Robert replies that he does not care. Jean-Jacques proposes a contract where Emile may plant beans in a corner of the plot on the condition that he will give half the produce to Robert. The gardener agrees but warns him not to touch his melons (98–99).

As noted, this story is usually taken to be a Lockean lesson in appropriating property through labor that is within children's limited reach. But is it? First, as far as the theoretical argument goes, Rousseau adds an important twist to the Lockean account: he focuses not on the original appropriation of property in a world of uncultivated land that meets the Lockean proviso that such appropriation is just so long as "there is enough, and as good, left in common to others,"[29] but on a world in which virtually all land has been appropriated. Rousseau's story takes place in a world in which there are those with gardens and those without them, a world of inequality. He makes this point emphatic shortly thereafter with a remark about the duties of the rich toward the poor stemming from the agreement to establish property (104).[30]

Second, as for the lesson, is it actually within the reach of the child or appropriate for him? Or, rather, for what child is the lesson apt? Rousseau introduced the context in which the story occurs by warning zealous masters against misapplied lessons. Even assuming that the

child actually understands what it means for property to "belong" to him, the misapplication of the lesson is signaled by the role that anger and indignation play in the story. Upon discovering his beans ruined, the nameless child in the story—just before he is named "Emile" in the dialogue—cries and is indignant at the perceived injustice done toward him. We should be reminded of the story of Jean-Jacques Rousseau witnessing the anger of a child struck by his nurse. Would the child raised according to nature cry and be indignant? Has the tutor played the role of the tempter in the garden, causing the unnatural passions to sprout and planting the seeds of vice? Is this child the "true" Emile? And the tutor the "true" Jean-Jacques? The narrative status of the story is uncertain.[31]

With the story concluded, Rousseau resumes his role as author and congratulates himself on this "model" of educating the child concerning the right of the first occupant through labor. "That is clear, distinct, simple, and within the child's reach," he states, going on to brag that what "I enclose [*renferme*] here in two pages of writing" perhaps took a year to put into practice (98–99). Shifting to the authorial "I," Rousseau takes ownership of his work by enclosing the text through his own labor. By calling attention to the writtenness of his text, Rousseau may be pointing to the problems of writing raised in Plato's *Phaedrus*, a concern that is more evident in the next story I will examine. For the present, Rousseau raises question of the appropriateness of the lesson concerning property for Emile by turning next to an example of an ordinary child: "Your ill-tempered child ruins everything he touches," telling a story of an angry child who breaks the windows of his room, with the tutor proclaiming his ownership of the windows, confining the child to a windowless room, and then proposing a contract stipulating that the child will not break windows. The parallels with the story of planting beans are manifest. Is this example of an ordinary, corrupt child meant to be a contrast to the story of the "real" Emile? Or is it meant to make us ask if this is another "Emile" who, if not corrupt, has awakened passions? Rousseau follows the example of the angry, destructive child by closing the narrative circle: "Here we are in the moral world; here the door on vice opens" (100–101). And thus concludes the portion of the text that opens the warning about not playing the tempter who introduces the knowledge of good and evil.

Let me entertain an alternative interpretation of the story of Emile's garden in order to make clear my intentions in the reading of it I have offered. A number of other scholars have argued that the deliberate provocation of indignation in Emile through his initial feeling of having been wronged is defused by his discovery that he is in fact the unjust

party. Emile is allowed to feel anger without the passion's deleterious effects, and he also learns a lesson concerning property. In this reading, then, the lesson is appropriate for the "real" Emile and not, as I have argued, a story involving an inappropriate lesson for an alternative pupil also (eventually) named "Emile."[32] This alternative reading is eminently plausible, and in fact the interpretation to which I myself have long subscribed. My point here is less to offer a better interpretation of this specific story, or other such stories, than to illustrate how Rousseau challenges the reader to ask whether the educational set pieces he relates, and the characters in them, accord with the principle of the natural goodness of man. Whether we agree or disagree concerning the "correct" interpretation of the story of Emile's garden, our readings of the story must be guided by the substantive argument of *Emile*, the ultimate lesson for the reader.

"Real" and "False" Emiles

Since the reader encounters characters named "Emile" and "Jean-Jacques" in the story of planting beans, it would seem at first blush that this reader has little reason to suspect that he is not reading about the "true" Emile or about a lesson that would not be appropriate for the eponymous student of the work. Lest my claim that the reader is being tested concerning the identity of the pupil in the story itself seem misapplied, later in the work Rousseau is more explicit about confounding "real" and "false" Emiles.[33] An example of this technique occurs in book III in a story in which master and tutor get lost in a forest.

The main theme of book III is teaching Emile about the physical world in which he lives, with the touchstone being utility. He explains near the outset: "It is a question not of knowing what is, but only of knowing what is useful" (166). And somewhat later: "What is that good for? This is now the sacred word, the decisive word between him and me in all the actions of our life. . . . He who is taught as his most important lesson to want to know nothing but what is useful interrogates like Socrates" (179). The reference to Socrates indicates the text with which Rousseau is in dialogue in *Emile* as a whole and book III in particular: Plato's *Phaedrus*. We have already seen his engagement with *Phaedrus* in the *Discourse on the Sciences and the Arts*, with the frontispiece depicting Prometheus bringing the gift of fire and the textual reference to the frontispiece relating it to the myth of Thoth as related in Plato's dialogue. The frontispiece to book III of *Emile* makes a parallel reference to the related myth of Hermes engraving the elements of the sciences on a column. I will return to this engraving in the following chapter.

For now, it suffices to note that the tutor teaches Emile to play the role of Thamos in the Platonic story, asking about the utility of the sciences and the arts with which he is presented. More important for the present purposes is the question of the utility of writing raised by Socrates, namely that while speech can be tailored to the character and capacity of the auditor, say a pupil, writing is indiscriminately available to any reader. Rousseau's challenge to the reader to identify "real" and "false" Emiles in book III in particular, and his alternation between different tutors and pupils in the work as a whole, is inspired by the discussion of writing and rhetoric in Plato's *Phaedrus*.

The story in question involving "real" and "false" Emiles is prepared at the beginning of book III when Rousseau illustrates the guiding pedagogical principle of utility with another story that itself involves a complicated confusion of masters and pupils. To compound the confusion, this story is imbedded in a contrast between different pupils and the apt and inapt lessons they receive, a version of the technique of staging a comparison between two pupils that we have already seen. Let us follow him step by step. First, he begins by addressing the reader in his potential role as tutor, urging "you" (*vous*) to make "your pupil" attentive to the phenomena of nature. He then accuses "you" of delivering an inappropriate lesson by teaching the pupil about geography with globes, cosmic spheres, maps, and other representations of the phenomena instead of having him observe the phenomena themselves. Second, having discussed "you" and "your pupil," he turns to himself and his pupil. "One fine evening we go for a walk in a suitable place where a broad, open horizon permits the setting sun to be fully seen," he begins, explaining how "we" note the location of its setting and then repeat the observation in the same location with the rising sun the next morning. The identity of "we" is not specified. Third, Rousseau then allows the tutor to blunder, switching the object of the narration from the first to the third person. Watching the rising sun with his pupil, "the master" wants to communicate the feelings inspired by the beauty of the spectacle to his pupil. "Pure stupidity!" comments Rousseau in his authorial voice: "It is in man's heart that the life of nature's spectacle exists. To see it, one must feel it. The child perceives the objects, but he cannot perceive the relations linking them; he cannot hear the sweet harmony of their concord" (168–69).[34] Fourth, Rousseau frames this complicated alternation from "we" to "he" by returning to the overarching narrative frame of a contrast between what "you" and "I" do with our respective pupils. He begins by addressing the reader (*vous*): "Do not make speeches to the child which he cannot understand." Then he resumes the "we" of master and pupil: "Raised in the spirit of our maxims, he"—that is, "my pupil"—"examines each new object he sees for a long time without saying anything." Finally, Rousseau turns to a proper lesson in cosmography, explaining how he gets his pupil to realize that the sun revolves around the earth, appearing in the east in the morning and setting in the west in the evening, and then suggesting how repeated observations of the location of the rising and setting sun at different times of year will transform the lesson from a Ptolemaic to Copernican one (169–70). How useful is this lesson to the pupil?

The utility of this lesson for the child is precisely what is at issue in the story of master and pupil getting lost in the forest. This story appears immediately following the passage in which he states that the pupil who asks "What is that good for?" interrogates like Socrates, thus alerting us to the problem of the appropriateness of different lessons for different recipients, a warning underscored by Rousseau when he writes just afterward, "I do not like explanations in speeches" (179–80). Rousseau sets up the story by returning to the lesson in cosmography with which he begins book III to illustrate the principle of utility with apt and inapt lessons for different pupils: "Let us suppose that while I am studying with my pupil the course of the sun and how to get one's bearings." Our immediate assumption is that "I" is the tutor Jean-Jacques and "my pupil" is Emile. But are they? Rousseau then has the tutor "I" bungle once again by delivering an inapt lesson: "What a fine speech I will make to him! . . . When I have finished, I shall have made a true pedant's display of which he will have understood not a single idea." The child, he explains, dare not interrupt the speech for fear "I" will get angry. The reference to anger should warn the reader that we may not be dealing here with the "true" Jean-Jacques or Emile. The switch of pupils becomes evident in the next paragraph when Rousseau writes that "our Emile" will not heed the elaborate explanations of the utility of the lesson by the hapless tutor (180). He then turns to the story of getting lost in the forest.

"We were observing the position of the forest north of Montmorency," he begins the story, with the child—"he"—interrupting "I" to ask about the utility of this lesson. As with the story at the outset of book III involving watching the setting sun, the identity of "we" is unspecified. The next morning "we" go for a walk before lunch and get lost in the forest: "Very hot, very tired, and very hungry, we accomplish nothing by our racing around other than to get more lost. Finally we sit down to rest and deliberate. Emile, who I am supposing has been raised like any child, does not deliberate; he cries." The child is identified as "Emile." But unlike the "real" Emile, this Emile is by supposition "raised like any child." Moreover, he cries out of frustration and perhaps anger.

A dialogue then ensues between our two heroes, "Emile" and "Jean-Jacques." In the dialogue, the tutor asks his charge: "Let me see your watch. What time is it?" It is noon. Then a dialogic lesson reminiscent of Plato's *Meno* takes place in which Emile is led by his tutor to deduce from the direction of the shadow that the town must lie to the south.[35] Off they march toward lunch, with Emile saying, "Astronomy is good for something," or, as Rousseau writes after resuming the narrative, he will at least think it, thereby calling into question the credibility of the narrative and embedded dialogue (180–81).

If the reader already has reason to suspect that he is not witnessing the "real" Jean-Jacques and the "real" Emile in this story, Rousseau reveals the trick some pages later. Returning to the principle of leading the child by utility, he states that the child will value a pastry chef over a goldsmith and will not even treat clockmaking very seriously: "The happy child enjoys time without being its slave. He profits from it and does not know its value." Then the reveal concerning the earlier story: "In assuming he has a watch as well as in making him cry, I gave myself a common [*vulgaire*] Emile, to be useful and to make myself understood; for, with respect to the true one [*le veritable*], a child so different from others would not serve as an example for anything" (187–88).[36] Now we have a "true" Emile and a "common" Emile. The contrast between them tests the reader. Would the "true" Emile cry? We were told earlier that he likely would not: "As soon as Emile has once said, 'It hurts,' very intense pains indeed will be needed to force him to cry" (77). Would the "true" Emile possess a watch?[37] The imaginary pupil has now become somehow real. Such, in fact, is Rousseau's aim: to persuade his reader to take Rousseau's "visions" for true and what he sees before his eyes as false.

Inapt Apologues

In his analysis of La Fontaine's fable "The Crow and the Fox" in book II, Rousseau complains that the morals, or apologues, maladroitly added to the fable are either unnecessary if the lesson is clear from the fable itself or inapt if the lesson drawn by the child is different (112). Or, as he protests later in the work when he returns to fables: "Nothing is so vain or so ill-conceived as the moral with which most fables end—as if this moral were not or should not be understood in the fable itself in such a way as to be palpable to the reader" (248). His analysis of how fables are read and misread is itself a lesson in reading for the reader of *Emile*. One technique he uses in his program of education is to offer inapt apologues to some of the stories he tells, challenging the reader

to draw a more correct moral. These stories often also involve the confusion over pupils and tutors I have just examined.

"Tai-toi Jean-Jacques"

Just before his analysis of "The Crow and the Fox," Rousseau relates an example concerning drawing the proper lesson from a story that involves himself as the supposedly historical Jean-Jacques Rousseau and a pupil other than Emile. He prepares this example after an authorial address to the reader that can be read only ironically: "Readers, always remember that he who speaks to you is neither a scholar nor a philosopher, but a simple man, a friend of the truth, without party, without system; a solitary who, living little among men, has less occasion to contract their prejudices and more time to reflect on what strikes him when he interacts with them" (110). With this flourish, Rousseau turns witness and enters into a story of once having visited a family that trotted out their young boy in the French fashion of parading his learning before the assembled guests. The child ably relates a story from Plutarch of Alexander the Great, who downed a potion prepared by his physician Philip despite rumors that the doctor aimed to poison him. The child's governor and the other adults admire Alexander for his courage. Rousseau the witness, and bad houseguest, tells the assembled guests they are wrong: that Alexander's action was if anything foolhardy rather than courageous, and that the true lesson lies elsewhere. Before he has the opportunity to explain, a woman sitting beside him stops him and whispers, "'Keep quiet, Jean-Jacques, they won't understand you.' I looked at her; I was struck; and I kept quiet" (111).

Tai-toi Jean-Jacques.[38] A warning to the reader as well? Will readers understand? But first, what about the child? Rousseau queries the child as to what lesson he took from the story he told and is not surprised to learn that he admired Alexander for bravely downing the potion, for he himself recently had to take a bitter-tasting medicine. This is as he expects, since he knows that a child, like natural man, has no conception of death. Indeed, he later alludes in *Emile* to the story of the physician Philip when he relates a misapplied lesson "I"—the supposedly historical Jean-Jacques Rousseau—once gave to an unidentified child concerning the dangers of wine adulterated with lead, only to realize that the child did not grasp the utility of the experiment because he had no conception of death (182–83). Yet another example of Rousseau claiming to have been deceived and allowing the reader to learn from his mistake. Apparently, he has learned something by the time he encounters the young admirer of Alexander.

Thus far Rousseau has been explicit about the series of mistakes being made by the people in his story: the adults are mistaken about the moral of the story and equally mistaken about the child being capable of understanding this moral. But what is the proper moral? After being unusually taciturn, and briefly returning to the main narrative with a reference to the story of Robert the gardener and a remark about the child's difficulty in grasping abstract concepts (perhaps indicating that the garden lesson was inapt?), Rousseau returns to taunt the reader:

> Some readers, discontented with the "Keep quiet, Jean-Jacques," will, I foresee, ask what, after all, do I find so fair in Alexander's action? Unfortunate people! If you have to be told, how will you understand it? It is that Alexander believed in virtue; it is that he staked his head, his own life on that belief; it is that his great soul was made for believing in it. Oh, what a fair profession of faith was the swallowing of that medicine! No, never did a mortal make so sublime a one. If there is some modern Alexander, let him be shown to me by like deeds. (111)

The reader is no longer deceived, or at least uninformed. Or is he? The further complications raised by this story need not be pursued, but only raised. Alexander was said to have emulated Achilles, the subject of the frontispiece to *Emile*, and he also deified himself. As such, did he refuse to consider himself to be "mortal" and therefore not vulnerable to death by poisoning? If not, what is the proper lesson to be drawn from the story? Is Alexander a good model to emulate? If Rousseau's story wrapped in a story is a kind of fable with a proper moral, the key to solving the riddle lies not in being told, but in becoming the kind of reader who comes to see and feel in such a way as to grasp the meaning.

The Crow and the Fox

The challenge to draw the proper moral from the story of Alexander and the physician Philip prepares the analysis of "The Crow and the Fox" that immediately follows. Rousseau begins by stipulating that, even though all children are made to learn La Fontaine's fables, Emile will not do so because they are beyond the grasp of children. In choosing "The Crow and the Fox" for analysis to prove his contention, Rousseau draws attention to the fact that he is making a choice of one fable among others. He mistakenly states that the fable he has chosen is placed at the head of the collection of fables (in fact, it is the second) and also remarks that he considers it the author's "masterpiece" (112–13).[39] In any case, he underscores the fact that something about this particular fable would seem to be worthy of attention.

Having made his choice, Rousseau presents a line-by-line analysis of the fable intended to show how its poetic language and other elements are beyond the child's capacity and often lead him to an interpretation of the fable different than that intended by the author. At one point in the analysis, Rousseau addresses a reader of his own work, indicating that a lesson should be drawn from his analysis. The verse in question is the line that introduces the speech made by the fox to the crow: "Made to him a speech of this kind" (Lui tint à peu près ce langage). He comments: "*A speech!* [*Ce langage!*] Foxes speak, then? They speak, then, the same language as crows. Wise preceptor, be on your [*toi*] guard: weigh your response well before making it. It is more important than you think" (114). This time Rousseau does not need a prudent lady tablemate to tell him to remain silent, and he leaves it to the reader ("wise preceptor") to adduce the correct interpretation of this mysterious remark.

What is the proper response? I suggest that this story of fabular animals speaking in a garden setting (not long after the story of Emile and his garden) is a stalking horse for the biblical story of the Garden of Eden, where a demon disguised as a snake successfully communicates with Eve. After all, the apologue to La Fontaine's fable concerns the crow's being tricked by the fox into letting a piece of cheese fall from his beak by an appeal to the crow's pride, another version of the Fall. Rousseau argues that this apologue is inapt for the child, who will be corrupted by wanting to imitate the fox (115). The fable may also be a stand-in for the catechism, for, as Rousseau concludes his dismissal of fables, "In society there is needed one morality in words and one in action, and these two moralities do not resemble each other. The first is in the catechism, where it is left. The other is in La Fontaine's fables for children and in his tales for mothers. The same author suffices for everything" (116). Evidence for this interpretation can be found in *Julie*, where Julie discusses teaching her son to read by first reading La Fontaine's fables, only to realize that the child drew the wrong apologue from the fable of the crow and the fox, and then composing versions of biblical stories, only to then reveal that they do not learn their catechism (*Julie*, V.2, *CW*, 6:476–77).[40] At any rate, to return to *Emile*, despite the explicit moral Rousseau draws from his analysis of the fable and its inapt apologue, he leaves it to the reader to draw further lessons concerning his purposes in presenting it.

Jean-Jacques in the Dark

Shortly after the analysis of fables, Rousseau presents a kind of fable through a story from his childhood. The context in which the story

comes is his recommendation that children become accustomed to the dark in order to overcome their natural fear of it. Mention of nurses telling stories of ghosts and goblins and making their charges superstitious indicates part of Rousseau's reasons for dwelling at such length on the subject. In the midst of his suggestions regarding "night games," then, Rousseau waxes elegiac: "There is a stage of life beyond which, in progressing, one retrogresses. . . . In getting old, I become a child again, and I recall more gladly what I did at ten than at thirty. Readers, pardon me, therefore, for sometimes drawing my examples from myself, for to do this book well I must do it with pleasure" (135).

The supposedly autobiographical story involves Jean-Jacques Rousseau when he and his cousin boarded with a minister, M. Lambercier. He emphasizes that his cousin was richer than he, and his jealousy leads him to taunt the boy for being afraid of the dark. The minister, bored by his boasting, sends Jean-Jacques one night to fetch a Bible that had been left in the church. Crossing the cemetery to reach the temple, he fearlessly reaches the church, only to get confused after entering and grow afraid. Leaving the church and unable to persuade his dog, Sultan, to accompany him, he reenters the church and once again grows fearful and runs back to the house. As he approaches the house, he hears M. Lambercier laughing, and presumes the laughter is at his expense, and then he hears Mlle. Lambercier expressing concern about him and sending someone to help: "Instantly, all my frights ceased, leaving me only the fright of being encountered in my flight. I ran—I flew—to the temple without losing my way." He fetches the Bible and runs back to the house and breathlessly presents it, "flustered by palpitating with joy at having been ahead of the help they intended for me." The moral of the story? "One might ask if I tell this story as a model to follow and as an example of the gaiety which I exact in this kind of exercise? No, but I give it as proof that nothing is more reassuring to someone frightened of shadows in the night than to hear company, assembled in a neighboring room, laughing and chatting calmly" (136).

Of course, this cannot possibly be the correct moral to this fable. Far from being reassured by laughter and chatter, the young Jean-Jacques's pride was piqued in the face of potential humiliation. The issue of pride has already been foreshadowed in the details of the story concerning his rivalry with his wealthier cousin. Moreover, his fear of the dark church suggests that he suffered from precisely the superstition that the "night games" he recommends are meant to combat. Finally, if we permit ourselves to consult some autobiographical information not available to the reader of *Emile* at the time of its publication, we can supplement this story with his account in book I of the *Confessions* of his stay with

his cousin with M. and Mlle. Lambercier, incidentally with no mention of the story of the Bible in the church. What is most striking about the account is his precocious sexuality at the hands of Mlle. Lambercier—literally, for he discovered he got erotic pleasure from being spanked by her (*Confessions*, *CW*, 5:11 ff.). One strongly assumes that Rousseau is making up the story of the nocturnal raid on Scripture, as perhaps signaled by the fact that, coincidence aside, "Sultan" was the name of his dog at the time he wrote *Emile*. At any rate, the apologue he offers for it is clearly inapt. The young Jean-Jacques Rousseau is an example of a corrupt child meant to be compared to the product of a proper education.

Cake Races

Another example of a story with an inapt apologue involves a mysterious "I" narrator who once trained a proud and lazy child to run, and later in *Emile* Rousseau, in his role as the tutor Jean-Jacques, recalls the story in a way that also challenges the reader to identify the "real" Emile. So, in this complex set of stories we have potentially mistaken identities of both tutor and pupil.

The first story of running comes in book II and is introduced abruptly into Rousseau's account of how to train the senses, in this case sight. As I noted in the introduction, the training in this portion of the work of the pupil's sight should be seen as a parallel to Rousseau's education of the reader through visual techniques, for example correcting sight by introducing differences in perspective in viewing an object (say, a circular tower that initially appears square to the eye), parallels correcting the reader's perspective by comparing "my pupil" to "your pupil" and by asking the reader to identify the "true" Emile.

The story in question commences with a kind of "once upon a time" beginning: "There was an indolent and lazy child who was to be trained in running." He then provides information about the child: he was too lazy to run because, although intended for a military career, he had persuaded himself that his rank and noble birth were "going to take the place of arms and legs as well as of every kind of merit." The child is likened to an Achilles, who would require the skill of Chiron to get him to run—an allusion to the frontispiece of book II featuring Chiron and Achilles, a subject to which I will return in the next chapter. Suddenly "I" is introduced: "The difficulty was all the greater since I wanted to prescribe to him absolutely nothing. . . . Here is how I went about it—I, that is to say, the man who speaks in this example" (141). Who is "I"? Jean-Jacques Rousseau? Jean-Jacques the tutor? An unnamed other tutor?

The mysterious "I" entices his proud pupil to run by staging running

races with cakes as the prize, appealing to the child's gluttony. The story is told with elaborate detail, with "I" involving other children in the races, altering the length of the course, and ensuring through various ruses that his young pupil would generally win, thus also appealing to his pride. He relates that while at first the "young knight" almost always ate his cake alone when he won, as he became accustomed to victory he displayed generosity by often sharing the prize with the vanquished. "That provided a moral observation for me," the narrator remarks, "and I learned thereby what the true principle of generosity is" (142). The reader is perhaps meant to recall the story of Jean-Jacques Rousseau having observed the infant slapped by its nurse and the indignant crying, leading him to conclude, perhaps mistakenly, that the sense of justness and unjustness is innate (65–66). Whatever the case regarding the "true principle of generosity" in this example, it is at least not clear that the narrator "I" drawing this moral lesson is Rousseau in any of his personae. The story of the running child then ends as abruptly as it began, with the narrator remarking that this training had exercised the child's sight as much as his legs: "Finally, a few months of tests and corrected errors formed the visual compass in him to such an extent that when I told him to think of a cake on some distant object, he had a glance almost as sure as a surveyor's chain" (143). Neither Rousseau nor the mysterious narrator draws an explicit moral from this fable, so the concluding remark about having successfully trained the child's "visual compass" has to stand as the purpose and moral of the lesson. But surely the chief aim of the lesson was intended not to exercise the child's sight, but to cure his pride or transform it. This proud "young knight" requires a different kind of education than Emile.

Rousseau references this story of running races within the romance of Emile and Sophie in book V. Their flirtation proceeds under the guidance of Jean-Jacques the tutor, who is likened not to Chiron but to Mentor, the tutor in Fénelon's *Telemachus*, to which I shall return in chapter 6. In the set-up to the story, Rousseau—whose narrative voice shifts between the authorial "I" and the perspective of Jean-Jacques as a character in the story itself—describes Emile: "But Emile's conduct is never devious; he does not know how to be evasive and does not want to be. He has that amiable delicacy which flatters and feeds *amour-propre* with the good witness of oneself" (435–36). Unlike the vain "young knight" of the earlier story, then, Emile's *amour-propre* has been properly developed. Sophie and Emile walk together and picnic, while Jean-Jacques and Sophie's father eat cakes and drink wine. Then abruptly: "Apropos of cakes. I speak to Emile of his former races." Emile engages in a race with a cake as the prize, and when he wins the race, "no less generous

than Aeneas, he gives presents to all the vanquished." As with the earlier running story, generosity is the outcome, but unlike the earlier child, Emile does not have to learn to be generous, for his pride has been directed in a healthy manner. Sophie then challenges Emile to race, and the analogous identities are further confused when the swift Sophie is likened to Atalanta (436–37).

Perhaps the layering of one analogue upon another—Emile as Telemachus and Aeneas and possibly Achilles, Sophie as Atalanta, the tutor(s) as Chiron and Mentor—is supposed to make the reader wonder about the identity of these participants and the relationship of this running story to the earlier one. The details of the story indicate that the reader is obviously meant to recall the earlier story about racing for cakes. But the earlier story involved "an indolent and lazy child," assuredly not Emile.[41] Admittedly, this may be an instance of a Homeric nod on the part of our author, but the reaction of the "attentive" reader would nonetheless still be instructive. That reader objects, "That wasn't *really* Emile in the earlier story!" Such an objection would be evidence of Rousseau's success: he has thoroughly persuaded his reader to take Emile as somehow "real," the exemplar to which the other child, who is after all the real child or at least like a real child, must be compared.

Making a Compass: Another Inapt Lesson?

If the inapt apologue to the story of training the "young knight" to run concerned the supposed goal of training his "visual compass," the last example I want to examine is allegedly designed to make a literal compass. The story occurs in book III and relates how "I" and "my pupil" are experimenting with magnets and visit a country fair in which a magician or showman (*bateleur*) uses a magnet to draw a duck floating in a tub of water.

Just before relating the story, Rousseau addresses the reader: "Here I am once again in my lengthy and minute details. Reader, I hear your grumbling and I brave it. I do not want to sacrifice the most useful part of this book to your impatience. Make your decision about my delays, for I have made mine about your complaints" (172). This challenge should put the reader on guard. Then the story begins: "A long time ago my pupil and I had noticed that amber, glass, wax, and various other bodies when rubbed attracted straws and that others did not attract them." The identities of both tutor and pupil are uncertain. Because of their experiments, the child realizes that the magician must be using a magnet to draw his duck, and, returning home, the tutor and pupil take it into their heads to imitate the magician by constructing their own mag-

netized duck. The next day they return to the fair and "my little doctor, who was hardly able to contain himself," excitedly tells the magician that he, too, can do the trick. Success and applause makes "[my] proud little naturalist chatter," the narrator states, but they leave the fair with him "covered with praise." Invited by the magician to return the next day, the excited child is stunned when his trick goes awry and the duck flees rather than approaches. The magician makes the duck come and dazzles the crowd with more elaborate tricks as the humiliated child looks on and then slinks away. Finally, the following day the magician shows up at their door to complain about the child and especially the tutor taking away his paltry livelihood as a country fair magician. The next day they visit the fair one last time and approach "our magician-Socrates" with respect (172–75).

The story over, Rousseau closes the narrative circle with another address to the reader: "Every detail of this example is more important than it seems. How many lessons in one! How many mortifying consequences are attracted by the first movement of vanity! Young master, spy out the first movements with care. If you know thus how to make humiliation and disgrace arise from it, be sure that a second movement will not come for a long time. 'So much preparation!' you will say. I agree—and all for the sake of making ourselves a compass to take the place of a meridian" (172–75).

The explicit apologue to this story is that the purpose was to make a compass, but Rousseau's remarks as author in the address to the reader suggest the true motive: to humiliate vanity. As noted, the identity of tutor and pupil are never given. Is this lesson appropriate for Emile, who we suppose would not display vanity? The details of the story suggest that the tutor has in fact inflamed the child's vanity, playing the tempter who introduces him prematurely to the knowledge of good and evil. One of the challenges faced by the reader, then, is to ask whether this would be an appropriate lesson for Emile and, relatedly, whether the child in question is in fact Emile. As with the stories of running races, the reader later faces this challenge again when Rousseau states that vanity must be humiliated in "my pupil" by repeating the lesson: "The adventure with the magician would be repeated in countless ways" (245). Is "my pupil" Emile?[42]

Conclusion

I want to conclude the analyses I have presented by emphasizing what I said at the outset about my intention. Namely, I am less interested here in offering new interpretations of the various stories Rousseau tells throughout *Emile* than I am in illustrating the narrative and other techniques Rousseau employs to educate and test the reader. I fear that the readings of mistaken identity and inapt apologues I have presented may seem to verge on being too clever by half. How do we determine who the "real" Emile is, or whether the apologues Rousseau appends to his fables are inapt? In some cases, Rousseau is clearer about the fact that he is offering a test or misdirecting the reader. For example, he himself tells us that he has given us a "common" Emile as opposed to the "true" Emile in the story of getting lost in the forest, and his claim that the purpose of the elaborate story of training a boy to run in order to hone his visual compass is transparently incomplete at best. However, I suggest that the purpose is less to ask the reader to identify the "true" Emile or the proper moral than to have the reader ask the question in the first place. In doing so, the reader is applying the overarching lesson of *Emile* of learning to observe human nature correctly, a lesson that entails rejecting the examples we have before our eyes and learning to see through the perspective Rousseau offers in the work. Rousseau's challenges invite the active participation of the reader in his own education.

Chapter 4

The Illustrative Education of *Emile*

When discussing the *Discourse on the Sciences and the Arts* and the *Discourse on Inequality*, I attended to the frontispieces to the two works as part of my analysis of the paratextual elements that initiate the education of the reader. *Emile* also includes illustrations—five of them, in fact, one for each of the five books into which the work is divided, with the frontispiece to book I doing double duty as the frontispiece to the work as a whole. The frontispieces to the two *Discourses* have received some attention from scholars, but the engravings that adorn *Emile* have earned only passing notice. As I noted in chapter 1 when discussing the frontispiece to the *Discourse on the Sciences and the Arts*, the only sustained attempts to interpret the illustrations in relation to the text in Rousseau's corpus have been for his best-selling novel, *Julie, or The New Heloise*. These analyses provide a useful interpretive approach to interpreting the engravings in all of Rousseau's works, but they are particularly apt for interpreting *Emile* because both works contain multiple illustrations and illustrations that are *explicitly* keyed to specific points in the text. To repeat what Philip Stewart argues with regard to *Julie*: "The illustration itself must be decoded and assimilated by the reader; and whether it is read before or after, it cannot be read simultaneously with or even independently of the passage to which it corresponds."[1]

In this chapter I interpret the engravings for *Emile* in relation to the text in order to understand how the dialogical interplay of the visual image and the written word educates the reader by posing an interpretive challenge designed to change the reader's perspective. Rousseau himself speaks in *Emile* of the necessity of using the language of signs when discussing how the tutor will instruct his pupil: "Let us try therefore to engrave it in his memory in such a way that it will never be effaced. One of the errors of our age is to use reason in too unadorned a form, as if men were all mind. In neglecting the language of signs that

speak to the imagination, the most energetic of languages has been lost" (*Emile*, 321).[2] His use of the verb "engrave" here is telling. As in the previous chapters, on the two *Discourses* and the education of the reader in *Emile*, in discussing the dialogic interplay between image and text in *Emile*, I highlight Rousseau's response to the challenge posed in Plato's *Phaedrus* concerning how a written work can speak to different audiences in different ways. This interpretive path is suggested by Rousseau himself when he includes a version of the myth of Thoth in the central engraving of *Emile* of Hermes bringing the elements of the sciences and the arts to mankind.

The Design of the Engravings

Some general remarks about the engravings for *Emile* are in order before turning to their interpretation. After the title page, frontispiece, and a brief preface, Rousseau includes a page titled "Explanations of the Illustrations" (36). As noted above in chapter 1, "Explanations" (mistranslated by Bloom in the singular) translates *Explications*, the term referring to a genre included in many books of the period that presented allegorical pictures and then decoded them. Whereas the *explications* Rousseau included in *Julie* in the Subjects of the Engravings are quite elaborate, with at least a paragraph devoted to each of the twelve engravings, the Explanations of the Illustrations in *Emile* are Spartan, with a single sentence for each of the five engravings. We know that Rousseau sent detailed instructions to the designer of the engravings for *Emile*, Charles Eisen, who was earlier responsible for the frontispiece of the *Discourse on Inequality*, but the correspondence has not survived.[3]

The placement of the five engravings for *Emile* at the head of each of the five books into which it divided, with one important exception, suggests that Rousseau's intention was to have them serve as frontispieces. This suggestion is buttressed by his instruction to the publisher that they be placed facing the opening page of each book.[4] The difference between *Emile* and *Julie* in this regard is instructive. There are two engravings for each of the six parts of the novel, with one near the beginning of each part and one near the end, thereby framing each part pictorially.[5] The novel's engravings illustrate the action of the story, at least at the most obvious level. By contrast, the engravings for *Emile* do not depict the action of the work.[6] Rather, they are allegorical devices that refer to the philosophical content of the work, and thus more akin to the frontispieces to the two *Discourses*.

Rousseau's intention to illustrate each of the five books of *Emile* with a frontispiece was frustrated by the production of the work, leading

him to make a partial change in plan. The original edition of *Emile* was published in four volumes (in octavo), and he therefore had to choose how to break the five books into four volumes. At the head of the first published volume is an engraving of Thetis, which Rousseau explains in the Explanations of the Illustrations "relates to the first book and serves as frontispiece to the work," that is, to the work as a whole (36). The first volume contains the first two books of *Emile*, and so the engraving of Chiron appears partway through the first volume at the head of book II. The second volume opens with the engraving of Hermes that adorns book III. Book IV commences partway through the second volume and continues into the third, which has an engraving of Orpheus at its head. Rousseau specified the exact beginning of the third volume in a letter to his publisher: "'Thirty years ago. . . .'" This is, of course, the beginning of the dramatic introduction to the "Profession of Faith of the Savoyard Vicar," and Rousseau instructed his publisher to place the engraving of Orpheus at this point as a frontispiece to the third volume.[7] In the Explanations of the Illustrations he characterizes the engraving of Orpheus as "belonging to Book IV" (36), thereby indicating that, unlike the other engravings, it does not represent the entire book and suggesting that it is an exception that proves the rule. His decision regarding the placement of this engraving has the effect of giving each published volume a frontispiece, with the disadvantage—at least for the interpreter—of leaving book IV as a whole without an unambiguous frontispiece. Finally, the fourth published volume contains book V and is illustrated with an engraving of Circe.

If the frontispieces to the two *Discourses* ask to be read as allegories of the entire work by both their subject matter and their status as frontispieces, several features of the engravings for *Emile* indicate that Rousseau had the same intention for this work. First, and most obviously, there is the content of the illustrations themselves. Rousseau chose subjects from mythology that are already allegorical. This impression is confirmed in the first textual reference to the subject of the first engraving, where he terms the story of Achilles' mother plunging him into the Styx an "allegory" drawn from a "fable" (47). His choice of mythological subjects makes the most obvious parallel for interpretation the frontispiece to the *Discourse on the Sciences and the Arts* depicting Prometheus bringing fire to mankind, which he also therein terms an "allegory" taken from a "fable" (*Sciences*, 23 n.). The allegorical intention is underscored by the title "Explanations of the Illustrations" (36), indicating that these explanations are meant as allegorical hints, given the meaning of the term *explication* noted above.

Second, Rousseau further underscores the primary role of the engravings as allegorical frontispieces by specifying legends that refer to the subject of the image rather than to their action: Thetis, Chiron, Hermes, Orpheus, and Circe. He was adamant on this score, for in one of his instructions to his publisher he demanded that the first engraving be identified as "Thetis" instead of the engraver's initial "Thetis plunging Achilles into the river Styx."[8] Only in the Explanations of the Illustrations does he summarize the action represented in the engravings, giving us a way to begin unpacking their significance. For example, he writes that the first engraving "represents Thetis plunging her son in the Styx to make him invulnerable" (36).

Finally, unlike the two *Discourses*, where he refers in the engraving's legend to a specific point in the text and then likewise refers in the text to the frontispiece, in *Emile* he nowhere directly refers in the text to an engraving. For example, in the case cited above, where he mentions the "allegory" of Thetis plunging her son into the Styx, he does not refer to the engraving, even though it obviously represents the allegory. The engravings thus somehow at once stand alone and exist only in reference to the text: by their very nature they function as allegories. The way in which Rousseau presents the engravings as part of the text and yet separate from it creates a doubling of the allegory that requires interpreting the engraving in relation to the text and vice versa.

The reader is encouraged by Rousseau to compare text and engraving by the citations in the Explanations of the Illustrations to the page of the text where he refers to the subject of the engraving for each book. (Bloom mistakenly replaces these textual citations with references to the page numbers of the engravings themselves.) Textual references are also included on the engravings, with the page number in the top right corner of the frame surrounding the picture. The Explanations of the Illustrations, along with the references to the text on the illustrations themselves, are thus invitations to interpretation. With these preliminary considerations regarding the function of the engravings in mind, then, we can now turn to a discussion of how the engravings play a role in the education of the reader.

Thetis

The engraving that serves as a frontispiece for book I, and for *Emile* as a whole, is entitled "Thetis" and depicts the sea nymph plunging her son into the river Styx (fig. 4.1).[9] Lest there be any question that the river in question is the Styx, in the background of the engraving is a barely perceptible Charon ferrying passengers to the underworld, a detail that subtly underscores the issue of mortality. In the Explanations

4.1 Frontispiece of *Emile* and book I: Thetis

of the Illustrations Rousseau states: "The illustration, which relates to the first book and serves as frontispiece to the work, represents Thetis plunging her son in the Styx to make him invulnerable" (36). The only information provided in this explanation not obvious from looking at the engraving itself is Thetis's intention: to render her son invulnerable. (Granted, someone familiar with the story would already know that.) Note also that Rousseau's explanation does not mention Achilles by name, thus further indicating that the principal figure is Thetis. Indeed, one might have reasonably expected that a book bearing the title of its eponymous subject would have a frontispiece that allegorically represented Emile, by Achilles for example, but this is not the case. Rousseau's intention in choosing this subject and including this particular explanation as the initial hint for interpretation therefore hinges on Thetis and her intention.

In choosing to make Thetis, and not Achilles, the principal subject of the frontispiece, Rousseau puts the focus less on the recipient of education than on the educator, in the broadest possible sense of the term. In fact, all of the engravings for *Emile* depict educators. "Our first preceptor is our nurse" (42), he explains of the first steps in our education, and famously urges mothers to nurse their own children. (Oddly, while the other sea nymphs are bare-breasted, Thetis's bosom is covered.) Thetis is a mother, and Rousseau opens his work by saying that he is addressing mothers: "It is to you that I address myself, tender and foresighted mother" (37). Mothers are nonetheless not the principal addressees of *Emile*, and, in fact, despite Rousseau's initial claim and his pleas in the beginning of the work to have mothers resume their traditional role, mothers soon disappear from Emile's education.[10] As we saw in the previous chapter, Rousseau's principal addressees in *Emile* are either "governors" (or similar terms), to whom he speaks teacher to teacher once he assumes the role of his imaginary pupil's imaginary governor, or "readers" more generally. At any rate, Thetis stands as the first would-be educator or, at the most general level, the first reader. The reader is invited to put himself (or herself) in the place of Thetis and interrogate her intentions of rendering her son invulnerable through the lens provided by the text.

The passage that corresponds to the frontispiece depicting Thetis, as indicated by the page references included both in the Explanations of the Illustrations and on the engraving itself, offers what at first seems to be a straightforward interpretation of the engraving. This interpretation will nonetheless prove unsatisfactory upon further reflection. The context in which this passage occurs regards the concern for the physical vulnerability of children, especially by mothers. Whereas some mothers

neglect their children, for example by not breastfeeding them, others carry their concern to excess, increasing the vulnerability of their child by preventing him from feeling his weakness and by hoping to exempt him from the laws of nature by keeping "hard blows away from him." At this point Rousseau suddenly introduces Thetis: "Thetis, to make her son invulnerable, plunged him, according to the fable, in the water of the Styx. This allegory is lovely and clear. The cruel mothers of whom I speak do otherwise: by dint of plunging their children in softness, they prepare them for suffering; they open their pores to ills of every sort to which they will not fail to be prey when grown" (47). Note that, like the Explanations of the Illustrations, this textual reference does not mention the more famous individual depicted in the engraving: Achilles. Once again, it is Thetis and her intention that are at issue.

The reader encounters the first interpretive challenge with Rousseau's claim that the allegory is "clear," for scrutiny of the passage in relation to the image soon reveals that it is not so clear after all. By contrasting Thetis with the "cruel mothers" who show excessive care for their children, he at first glance seems to approve of Thetis's intention to render her son invulnerable. In keeping with this, two paragraphs later he recommends: "Harden their bodies against the intemperance of season, climates, elements; against hunger, thirst, fatigue. Steep them in the water of the Styx" (47). This advice might make sense if the child's physical vulnerability were all that were at stake. But it is not. After first introducing Thetis, Rousseau immediately turns to the issue of psychological vulnerability, that is, the health of the soul with regard to the passions. The issues of physical and psychological vulnerability are connected through the question of human mortality, and these new concerns complicate the initial, positive interpretation of Thetis's intention to render her son invulnerable. Indeed, the reader should in fact already have realized that the initial interpretation is insufficient, for just a few pages earlier Rousseau warned: "One thinks only of preserving one's child. That is not enough. One ought to teach him to preserve himself as a man, to bear the blows of fate. . . . You may very well take precautions against his dying. He will nevertheless have to die. And though his death were not the product of your efforts, still these efforts would be ill conceived. It is less a question of keeping him from dying than of making him live" (42). This language about teaching a child to "bear the blows of fate" foreshadows the language he uses immediately before introducing Thetis as an apparently positive alternative to mothers who show excessive concern for a child by keeping "hard blows away from him" (47). Thetis's intention in making her son invulnerable

is precisely to render him immune from death, or at least as immune as her hold on his foot allows.

The initial interpretation of the engraving is further complicated just a few pages later when Rousseau makes another reference to the fable depicted in the engraving in relation to the subject of medicine. In one of his characteristic diatribes against this "lying art," he warns that the effects of medicine on the body are less important than those they have on the psyche because it introduces us prematurely to the terrors of death. In order to illustrate his point, he adduces the example of Achilles: "It is the knowledge of dangers that makes us fear them; he who believed himself invulnerable would fear nothing. By dint of arming Achilles against peril, the poet takes from him the merit of valor; every other man in his place would have been an Achilles at the same price" (55). By rendering Achilles invulnerable, Thetis—or, rather, "the poet"—deprives him of the virtues appropriate for mortal human beings. Rather than instructing his reader to alter his pupil by taking hold of him by the heel and dipping him in the Styx, Rousseau counsels: "Do you, then, want him to keep his original form? Preserve it from the instant he comes into the world. As soon as he is born, *take hold of him* [*emparez-vous de lui*] and leave him no more before he is a man" (48; emphasis added). As the "poet" of his own work, as both author and tutor, Rousseau will not attempt to render Emile invulnerable. As Patrick Deneen states: "Rousseau's choice of a model here is most perplexing, given that it stands directly in contradiction to the central meaning of his lesson. Thus, his claim that the meaning of the allegory 'is clear' is wholly misleading, even deceptive."[11] In sum, the allegory of Thetis is hardly "clear" in relation to Rousseau's text.

The first mention of Achilles invites the reader to compare the epic hero with Emile. Rousseau himself seems to ask us to do so by introducing his imaginary pupil (51) in between the initial textual reference to Thetis (47) and the subsequent reference to Achilles (55). In fact, as I have noted, this comparison is already suggested by the fact that the frontispiece depicting Thetis plunging her son in the Styx is placed directly across from the title page of the work. In addition to the title and the author, the title page includes an epigraph identified as coming from Seneca's *On Anger*: "We are sick with evils that can be cured; and nature, having brought us forth sound, itself helps us if we wish to be improved" (Sanabilibus aegrotamus malis; ipsaque nos in rectum genitos natura, si emendari velimus, iuvat; 31).[12] As we saw in the previous chapter, the accounts of observing indignant infants or the stories involving angry children Rousseau challenge the reader to ask whether these children

are the product of a corrupt education. To return to Achilles, it is therefore no accident that the principal characteristic of Achilles is anger, an anger that is not even satiated, much less cured. Emile is no Achilles.[13]

The epigraph Rousseau chooses for *Emile* not only reminds us of the chief characteristic of the unnamed infant depicted on the frontispiece, but also claims that the disease can be cured, or rather that it is unnatural in the first place. No more natural are the concern with glory and the knowledge of death that also characterize Achilles. These passions and this knowledge create the psychological vulnerability to which pride, anger, and despair are responses. The knowledge of death is not natural and is one of the first acquisitions we make in society, Rousseau tells us in the *Discourse on Inequality* (*Inequality*, 73). He reminds us of this argument in *Emile* immediately after mentioning Achilles: "Naturally man knows how to suffer with constancy and die in peace. It is doctors with their prescriptions, philosophers with their precepts, priests with their exhortations, who debase his heart and make him unlearn how to die" (55).[14] Likewise, in an apparent allusion to Thetis's intention as depicted in the frontispiece, Rousseau asks: "Can you conceive of some true happiness possible for any being outside of its constitution? And is not wanting to exempt man from all the ills of his species equally to make him quit his constitution?" Such a being cannot be contented, and his unfulfilled demands make him angry: "How could I conceive that a child thus dominated by anger and devoured by the most irascible passions might ever be happy?" (87). Physical vulnerability is less at issue in *Emile* than the psychological condition of a being with unnatural acquisitions that are in tension with its natural endowments. If the reader notices Rousseau's shift from physical to psychological ills with his two allusions to Achilles in the text, he will realize that Achilles is in fact an inappropriate model.

The shift in emphasis from physical invulnerability to psychological vulnerability with the references to Achilles in book I is further confirmed by a final textual reference to the subject near the end of the work as a whole, in book V. This reference comes in the context of the tutor Jean-Jacques warning Emile of his vulnerability now that he has fallen in love with Sophie: "'When you entered the age of reason, I protected you from men's opinions. When your heart became sensitive, I preserved you from the empire of the passions. If I had been able to prolong this inner calm to the end of your life, I would have secured my work, and you would always be as happy as man can be. But, dear Emile, it is in vain that I have dipped your soul in the Styx; I was not able to make it everywhere invulnerable'" (443). Note that the tutor has plunged Emile's soul, not his body, into the river Styx. Since this third

reference occurs shortly after the textual reference to the subject of the engraving for book V, Circe, I will return to this issue. For now, we can say that the three references to Thetis plunging her son into the river Styx might be characterized as tests of the reader's progress in the education provided by the work.

Chiron

Psychological vulnerability in Rousseau's understanding comes most importantly from the conflict between nature and society. "Everything is good, as it leaves the hands of the Author of things; everything degenerates in the hands of man," he begins book I. He then compares a child to a shrub that grows up in the middle of the highway and asks his "tender and foresighted mother" to keep the nascent shrub away from the highway (37–38). But the human highway is here to stay. Natural man having vanished, nature cannot simply take its course; an education that manages the conflict between nature and society is required. The education Rousseau envisions demands a philosophical understanding of human nature and its development in society, an education provided to Emile and by *Emile*. The composite beast of philosopher-tutor therefore replaces the mother in the narrative. The change once again parallels the allegory Rousseau has chosen for the frontispiece, for Thetis gives the centaur Chiron charge of her son's education.[15] The principal subject of the engraving for book II remains a tutor, and once again it is the tutor's intentions with regard to his pupil that are the key to interpreting the allegory.

The subject of the engraving at the head of book II (fig. 4.2), Rousseau states in the Explanations of the Illustrations, "represents Chiron training the little Achilles in running" (36). Rousseau carries the story of Achilles through the entire first volume of the published work, both books I and II being contained in the first volume. The wise centaur Chiron has served as a representation of the educator, and Rousseau and his reader would be familiar with the fable from many sources. The specific version of the fable portrayed in the engraving is not immediately derived from Homer, where the references to the "most righteous of the centaurs" is to his skill in medicine and his teaching of that art to Asclepius and to Achilles.[16] In other classical sources Chiron acquires further credentials, and he is represented as teaching music, hunting, and other arts to Achilles and others. Such is the reputation of the semiequine educator that Xenophon begins his treatise on hunting by adducing Chiron's mastery of the art as warrant for the subject's importance.[17] Finally, the metaphorical possibilities of a teacher who

4.2 Illustration for book II of *Emile*: Chiron

is half god, half animal were not lost on authors who used Chiron for exemplary purposes. Notably, Machiavelli claims that ancient writers covertly taught princes to "use the man and the beast" through the example of Chiron teaching Achilles.[18] Rousseau also appeals to Chiron's nature as half god, half beast, but what is important in his case is the philosophic knowledge of human nature and development required for the proper education of a naturally asocial and good animal in the bosom of society. Previous thinkers and educators have failed precisely because they lacked such knowledge. They do not recognize the contradictions between "man" and "citizen" that produce a being who is good neither for himself nor for others (39–41).

While the frontispiece of book II recalls traditional depictions of Chiron and Achilles, the differences in Rousseau's version point to his philosophical departure from his predecessors. In most versions, the centaur and his young charge are depicted hunting, Achilles often astride his tutor, one or both of them with bow and arrow in hand. By contrast, in Rousseau's version Chiron and Achilles are not hunting. Further, Achilles is afoot, and we are informed in the description of the engravings that he is being trained in running (*à la Course*). In the engraving in *Emile* they are engaged in hunting of a certain sort, for Chiron is accepting a hare from Achilles, which the boy seems to have chased and caught and which appears to be still alive. In (re)turn, Achilles is receiving an apple from Chiron.[19] If this a representation of hunting, it is a decidedly bloodless one. Sword, shield, and helmet lie on the ground; Rousseau has at least partially disarmed the centaur. The mythical sources warn us of the unruly nature of centaurs, and the image of the centauromachy decorated numerous ancient artifacts, including the Parthenon, with the most famous remnants of that very scene being among the Elgin Marbles. If hunting is an appropriate pursuit for little Achilles, Rousseau's young charge pursues fruit and other sweets.

The primarily therapeutic role of the educator as represented by Chiron is clear in the textual reference in book II to the engraving, and as in the case of Thetis in book I, Rousseau's emphasis is on a psychological rather than a physical treatment. The reference to Chiron and Achilles comes in a story about getting a lazy and proud child to run, and the story involves a child other than Emile and a tutor apparently other than Jean-Jacques. This is one of the stories I examined in the previous chapter, in this case a story involving both a substitution of tutors and pupils and an inapt apologue. Since my focus here is on the visual education of the reader, let me expand now on one aspect of the story I previously mentioned only in passing. Namely, the story of training a lad to run comes in the context of Rousseau's discussion

of the exercise of sight. He notes how the sense of sight can lead one to mistaken judgments because of the limitations and illusions caused by perspective. In addition to verifying what sight alone tells us by other senses, for example touch, he recommends looking at the same object from different vantage points: "What is more, the very illusions of perspective are necessary for us to come to a knowledge of extension and to compare its parts. Without false appearances we would see nothing in perspective" (140). The visual education of Emile is akin to the visual education of *Emile*, as Rousseau constantly has the reader look at the same object from different angles and to compare different objects, for example "my pupil" and "your pupil."[20]

As for the anecdote relating to the frontispiece of book II, as noted in the previous chapter, it is introduced abruptly: "There was an indolent and lazy child who was to be trained in running." Rousseau goes on to explain that this noble lad did not like to run or engage in any other exercise even though he was destined for a military career. Having said this, he makes the reference to the engraving to book II: "To make of such a gentleman a light-footed Achilles, the skill of Chiron himself would have hardly sufficed." Finally, he complicates the identity of the narrator "I" who serves as Chiron to this indolent Achilles: "Here is how I went about it—I, that is to say, the man who speaks in this example" (141). Then, through an elaborate scheme, elaborately described, the tutor gets his young charge to compete with other children, with cake for a prize. In conclusion, he offers an inapt or at least incomplete moral to the story: that the young lad had his "visual compass" trained by learning to estimate the course he would race (143). Although Rousseau began this story by suggesting the child's need for physical exercise, as we saw in the previous chapter, the details of the story of the young knight already point to the true purpose of teaching him to run: to cure his pride. Finally, as we also saw there, Rousseau returns to the topic of racing for cakes in book V in a story involving Emile, whom Jean-Jacques reminds of his supposed races as a child—"Apropos of cakes . . ." (436)—thus further complicating the identities of pupils and tutors and challenging the reader to discern what lesson is appropriate for what student.

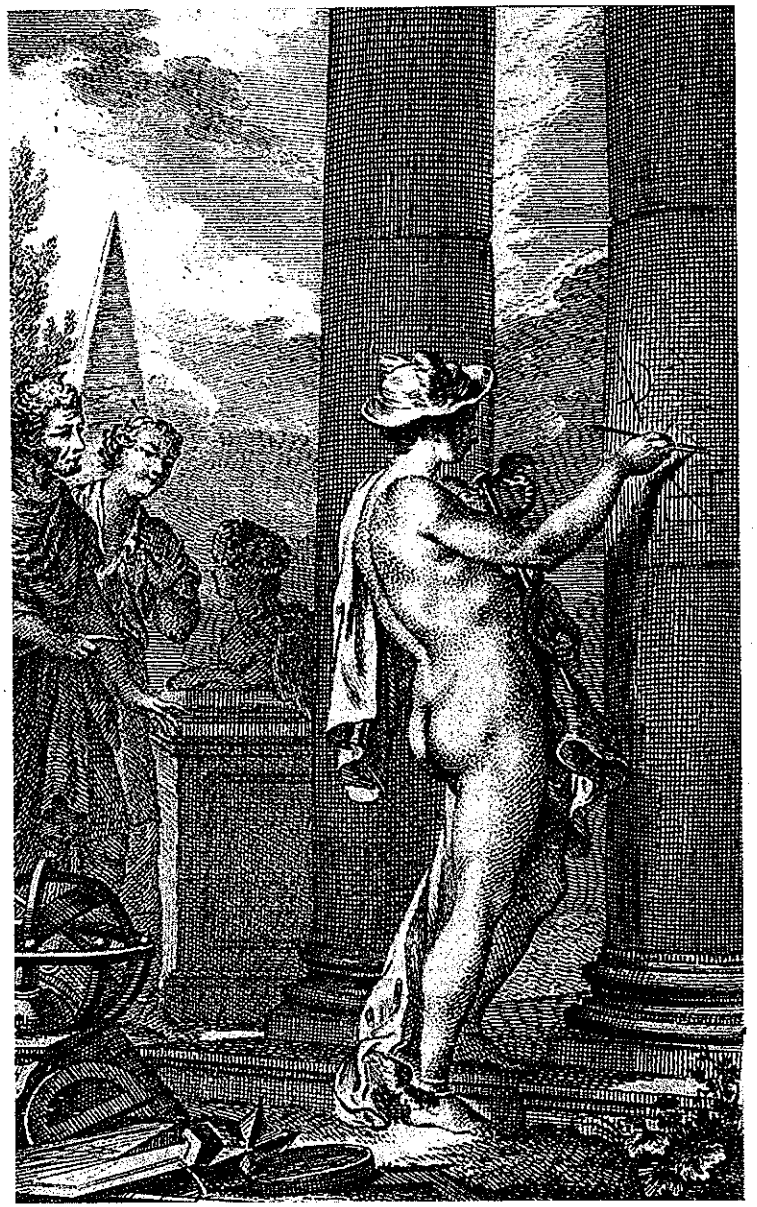
Let us now relate this story to the engraving. First, the engraving of Chiron and Achilles seems to illustrate an episode in the book, if metaphorically, for it is a story of teaching a boy to run. The textual reference to the engraving, stating that a Chiron would be needed to teach this particular Achilles, initially seems to underscore the direct nature of the allegory. The directness of the allegory is called into question or at least complicated if the real moral of the story concerns not training

in running but the taming of pride. How does the engraving of Chiron and Achilles relate to this more complicated allegory? First, we might begin by noting that the engraving itself involves the topic of exchange or substitution: an exchange or substitution of an apple for a hare. Rousseau's textual reference to the engraving therefore appropriately involves a substitution of one pupil for another and one narrator-tutor for another, as well as one moral to the story for another.

Second, the depiction of Chiron in the frontispiece may provide a clue to Rousseau's intentions. In the mythical versions of the story, Chiron teaches Achilles hunting as preparation for the epic warrior; in Rousseau's version, Chiron is disarmed and Achilles accepts an apple for his running. Rousseau plays a variation on the theme of Chiron and Achilles in a tamer key. Achilles is not at all known for his generosity or humanity, but what links the two stories of running in *Emile* is generosity. The young knight of book II shares his cakes with the vanquished through a generosity born of redirected pride. In turn, Emile in book V also apportions his pastry, but through a generosity based on a properly regulated *amour-propre* and pity. The one required a cure, and the education of the other prevented the disease in the first place. Whatever the differences in their educations, though, both the young boy and Emile are different from Achilles. An apple is an appropriate alimentary reward for a new Achilles. Recall in this light that in book II, shortly after the story where he refers to the subject of the engraving, Rousseau includes a long quotation from Plutarch on Pythagorean vegetarianism, by far the longest quotation in the entire work, which he claims is "foreign" to his work but which points to the crucial role of pity in his understanding of human nature and development (154–55). The bloodthirsty pride and anger of Achilles must be prevented, as with Emile, or cured, as with Rousseau's haughty onetime pupil.[21]

Hermes

The engraving at the head of the second volume and the beginning of book III represents Hermes engraving the elements of the sciences on a column (fig. 4.3). Once again, we have a tutor for the principal figure in the engraving, but unlike the images depicting Thetis and Chiron, Hermes does not have a specific pupil, although there are onlookers (perhaps a teacher and student?). The absence of a specific pupil turns out to be significant for interpreting the engraving in relation to the text, for Rousseau explains that Emile will not learn the sciences from books or other graven images. Nor will Emile learn the sciences from an astrolabe or the other complicated machinery scattered on the ground



4.3 Illustration for book III of *Emile*: Hermes

at Hermes' feet, a detail that parallels the sword and shield lying unused at Chiron's feet. Hermes' lessons are not appropriate for Emile, and hence no specific pupil is depicted in the engraving. Given especially that the engraving depicts engraving or writing, there is, however, an implied pupil: the reader of the book, a pupil who emphatically does require Rousseau's instruction.

While the figure depicted is clearly the winged messenger god, the mythological source of the scene does not involve the Greek god. The source is both earlier and later than classical Hellenic literature, having its roots in the Egyptian myth of Thoth and only becoming identified with Hermes (or Hermes Trismegistus) in the later hermetic tradition. As with the frontispiece to the *Discourse on the Sciences and the Arts* displaying Prometheus and the textual note referencing the story of Thoth, Rousseau is in dialogue with Plato's *Phaedrus*. The same concern with speaking to different audiences in different ways, through both text and image, that occupies Rousseau in the frontispiece of the first *Discourse* can be seen in the engraving of Hermes.

The textual reference in book III to the engraving of Hermes enunciates some of the same suspicion of the sciences and the arts as Rousseau's earlier prizewinning essay: "I hate books. They teach one to talk only about what one does not know. It is said that Hermes engraved the elements of the sciences on columns in order to shelter his discoveries from a flood. If he had left a good imprint of them in man's head, they would have been preserved by tradition. Well-prepared minds are the surest monuments on which to engrave human knowledge" (184). Emile will not learn the sciences or arts from books, but from experience. As Isabelle Michel notes: "In the case of Hermes . . . Rousseau is closer to a counter-example, despite the connection established by the teaching of the sciences."[22] Rather than constituting a contradiction, however, the misapplied example of Hermes poses a challenge to the reader.

Different lessons are appropriate for different students. The textual reference to Hermes in book III comes in between the story of the tutor Jean-Jacques and Emile lost in the forest north of Montmorency (180–81) and Rousseau's revelation of the deception that he has substituted a "common" Emile for the "true" one in order to better instruct the reader (187–88). I examined this story in the previous chapter as an example of Rousseau's challenging the reader to correctly identify pupils and the lessons appropriate for them. It is therefore no accident that immediately after the story about Montmorency, and just before the textual reference to Hermes, Rousseau regales his reader with a recollection of his own mistaken lesson given to a child. The chemistry lesson involved explaining how ink was made, and when the bored student did not see

the utility of the experiment, the hapless Jean-Jacques tried another experiment showing how to test whether wine was adulterated with lead, a lesson whose utility was also lost on the child because he did not have any conception of death (182–83). With these misapplied lessons in place, Rousseau turns his declaration about his detestation of books and the reference to Hermes engraving the elements of the sciences on columns (184). The misapplied lesson and the diatribe about books are related: after all, books are printed with ink. The question therefore becomes for whom books are useful, and in what way.

Just after the textual reference to the engraving, Rousseau's pupil receives his one product of the typographer's art: *Robinson Crusoe*. Defoe's work as adapted by Rousseau depicts a condition of something analogous to a natural man with developed faculties: "This state, I agree, is not that of social man," Rousseau acknowledges; "very likely it is not going to be that of Emile. But it is on the basis of this very state that he ought to appraise all the others" (184–85). I will examine Rousseau's use of Defoe's novel in chapter 6. For now, it suffices to say that Rousseau's condemnation of books comes in a book, and his pedagogical treatise should be read in the same light.[23] The book *Emile* serves Rousseau's readers in the same way that *Robinson Crusoe* serves Emile: as the basis on which they are to appraise their own state. Rousseau's *Emile* is appropriate for the reader, but not for Emile himself.

Rousseau's condemnation in *Emile* of Hermes' gift of writing is patterned after Socrates' critique of writing in Plato's *Phaedrus*, also a written work. Several parallels between the Socratic myth and Rousseau's treatment of the sciences and the arts in book III are evident. To begin with, as noted in the previous chapter, the tutor teaches Emile to play the role of Thamos: "What is that good for? This is now the sacred word, the decisive word between him and me in all the actions of our life. . . . He who is taught as his most important lesson to want to know nothing but what is useful interrogates like Socrates" (179; see 167–68). The quest for utility inspires Emile in his imitation of Robinson Crusoe. The absence of obvious utility is also central to the cautionary tale Rousseau tells about teaching a child about ink and adulterated wine. Emile will be shown the things at their true value and not at how other people appraise them. Once again, Rousseau's education is designed to prevent vanity in Emile, or, in his other examples of less well-governed children, to cure or redirect the passion.

The "Citizen of Geneva" in the *Discourse on the Sciences and the Arts* is Prometheus bringing fire but also warning of its abuse, and so too is Rousseau Hermes in the engraving for book III of *Emile*. As tutor he engraves the elements of the sciences on Emile's mind, and as author

of the very book he is writing he warns of the dangers of books. As in the *Discourse*, Rousseau addresses multiple audiences. I have already indicated one method Rousseau uses in *Emile*: including multiple students with different temperaments, therefore requiring different lessons as part of the education of the reader. The cake race related to the engraving for book II of Chiron teaching the young Achilles to run is one such example. Rousseau thereby answers Socrates' critique of writing even as he engraves his teaching into an imperishable product of the typographer's dangerous art.

Orpheus

The engraving of "Orpheus teaching men the worship of the gods," as Rousseau describes it in the Explanations of the Illustrations (36), poses certain difficulties for interpretation (fig. 4.4). As noted earlier, the placement of this engraving was at least to some degree necessitated by the practical problem of apportioning the five books of *Emile* into four published octavo volumes. The circumstantial evidence therefore suggests that the idea of illustrating book IV with Orpheus was a late decision dictated in large part by necessity.[24] "Belonging" to book IV but apparently not representing it as a whole, Orpheus seems to be less a metaphoric summary of book IV than a representation of a portion of that book, namely the "Profession of Faith of the Savoyard Vicar." At any rate, with Orpheus we have yet another tutor portrayed in the engraving, as with Hermes, an unspecified student, once again raising the question of for whom Orpheus's song—or the Savoyard Vicar's speech—is appropriate. I will devote the next chapter to a more detailed discussion of the dramatic introduction to the "Profession" and the question of audience, so for the present I will only discuss these issues as they relate to the figure of Orpheus.

The textual reference in book IV to the engraving of Orpheus comes in the introduction to the "Profession" itself with, the young Jean-Jacques Rousseau proclaiming: "The good priest had spoken with vehemence. He was moved, and so was I. I believed I was hearing the divine Orpheus singing the first hymns and teaching men the worship of the gods" (294). The emphasis in this description on the emotive effect of the Vicar's speech is central to interpreting both the engraving and the "Profession" itself. The tension between emotive effect and rational content is evident in the continuation of the passage: "Nevertheless I saw a multitude of objections to make to him. I did not make any of them, because they were less solid than disconcerting, and persuasiveness was on his side" (294). Recall that the lawgiver of the *Social Contract* (II.7)

4.4 Illustration for book IV of *Emile*: Orpheus

cannot reason with the people, so he must "persuade without convincing" by proclaiming the gods as the authors of the laws (*Contract*, 193).[25] The "divine Orpheus" sings, and so persuasively that the animals are charmed, as the engraving shows. The religious teaching of the "Profession" is at least partially directed to the emotional, to the animal, in us. The engraving therefore shows Orpheus singing to animals.

To whom is the "Profession of Faith of the Savoyard Vicar" directed, and for whom would it be an appropriate lesson? Again, I will examine these questions at greater length in the following chapter, so for now a few summary remarks will have to suffice. Rousseau frames the "Profession" with an elaborate dramatic setting that supposedly occurred some thirty years earlier and involved a young boy who encountered a kindly vicar. Although Rousseau hints that the boy is himself (264), this suggestion is itself complicated by the fact that he claims that he is transcribing what "the author of the paper" has written and offering it as a set of potentially "useful reflections" (260). At any rate, he describes the young auditor of the Vicar's profession of faith as having precociously awakened pride and sexual desire (see 261–63), and he also indicates that the "Profession" would be useful to a similarly corrupted public (see 295 and n., 313–14 n.). What about Emile? Is the "Profession" appropriate for an uncorrupted "natural man in society"? Rousseau is cagey about whether his pupil has heard anything resembling the Vicar's speech (see 313–14). He has once again engaged in a substitution of pupils, this time his supposed younger self for his imaginary pupil, who reenters the narrative just after the "Profession." Finally, to return to the engraving of Orpheus: as with Hermes, we have a teacher without a specific pupil, which would seem to indicate that Emile is not the intended recipient of Orpheus's lessons. Also, and again as with Hermes, we have a number of onlookers (or rather auditors) who might require such lessons. In this sense, then, the engraving of Orpheus that "belongs" to book IV is an apt choice not just for the "Profession," but for that book as a whole, because it represents the relationship of speaker and audience, persuasive speech and those for whom such persuasion is appropriate.

Once again, as with the engraving of Hermes, we can gain insight concerning the proper audience of the "Profession" from the Platonic source regarding the question of different lessons being appropriate for different audiences. "One of the things that makes preaching most useless is that it is done indiscriminately to everyone without distinction or selectivity," Rousseau writes just after the "Profession": "How can one think that the same sermon is suitable to so many auditors of such diverse dispositions, so different in mind, humor, age, sex, station, and opinion? There are perhaps not even two auditors for whom what one

says to all is suitable" (319). The echo of *Phaedrus* is unmistakable. Just a few pages later, then, the tutor Jean-Jacques finally reveals himself to be the godlike creator of Emile (323). His description of the setting for this speech to his pupil parallels the scene chosen by the Vicar for revealing himself to the young Jean-Jacques, the scene of the rising sun seen from a hill in which "nature [was] displaying all its magnificence to our eyes in order to present them with the text for our conversation" (266). The tutor Jean-Jacques explains how he will speak "about the subject in which I want to instruct him," a coy preamble to be sure: "I shall begin by moving his imagination. I shall choose the time, the place, and the objects most favorable to the impression I want to make. I shall, so to speak, call all of nature as a witness to our conversations." Setting the scene and revealing himself to the young Emile, Rousseau comments: "It is in this way that you get a young man to listen to you and that you engrave the memory of what you say to him in the depths of his heart" (323). Another echo of Plato. But what is the elusive "subject in which I want to instruct him" here? Aside from revealing himself to Emile, Jean-Jacques turns to the subject of sex, for the time is ripe for such a discussion, given Emile's budding passions. The parallels between the dramatic setting of the "Profession" and the speech Jean-Jacques makes to Emile suggest that they are different lessons suitable for different pupils. It seems that romantic love is for Emile an appropriate substitute for the teaching presented in the "Profession."

If Jean-Jacques plays Orpheus to Emile, he sings persuasively not of the gods, but of love. No women are depicted among the auditors in the engraving of Orpheus (who in the myth dies when he is torn apart by frenzied women).[26] If sexual longing is the downfall of the Savoyard Vicar (262) and a danger to his auditor, an idealized female is introduced to complete Emile's education. Rather than stifling the imagination, the tutor will guide it: "I shall make him moderate by making him fall in love" (327). Rousseau thus introduces the imaginary figure of the object of Emile's affections, whom he calls Sophie (329). Emile and his tutor then set off in search of such a companion, who will become Emile's final preceptor. Hence the engraving of Circe and Ulysses that introduces book V.

Circe

The engraving of Circe at the head of book V appears to represent Sophie, to whose charge the tutor Jean-Jacques entrusts Emile after their marriage: "'Today I abdicate the authority you confided to me, and Sophie is your governor from now on'" (479). Like the educators depicted in the

previous engravings, Circe is divine or semidivine. Romantic love of an ideal woman has sublimated or perhaps transfigured Emile's passions, preventing him from being transformed through sexual desire into an animal, like Ulysses' swinish companions. Rousseau summarizes the engraving in the Explanations of the Illustrations: it "represents Circe giving herself to Ulysses, whom she was not able to transform" (36). Emile seems to be represented by Ulysses, and the tutor's management of Emile's passions also elevates him to be someone who, if not quite divine, is heroic. Emile thus becomes an exemplar of human nature and virtue that replaces the classical exemplars represented by Achilles as well as Ulysses.[27] Nonetheless, as with the first engraving featuring Thetis, Rousseau's *explication* emphasizes not Ulysses' action or intention, but rather Circe's: giving herself to Ulysses because she was not able to transform him. Likewise, as noted above, Sophie is described in the text as Emile's final "governor," and so the key to interpreting the engraving lies in assessing Sophie's intention with regard to Emile.

The story represented in the engraving is drawn from Homer's *Odyssey*.[28] Hermes plays a role in this story, for it is the messenger god who equips Odysseus with the moly that enables him to withstand Circe's charm, and in the engraving the herb is clearly seen in Ulysses' left hand, connecting book III to book V. Rousseau too is interested in guarding his pupil against the temptations of the passions, and the moly he provides in his role as Hermes is the application of the teaching in his book regarding the natural and artificial passions. In this light, given that his aim is to persuade his reader of the natural goodness of man, it is critical to consider an alternative frame he provides for book V. Namely, he introduces the book by writing: "Now we have come to the last act in the drama of youth, but we are not yet at the dénouement. It is not good for man to be alone. Emile is a man. We have promised him a companion. She has to be given to him. That companion is Sophie" (357). Rousseau echoes the scriptural account of Adam being given a companion, but he aims to introduce Sophie without a Fall. (Although the unfinished sequel to *Emile* complicates this interpretation.) Yet if Sophie is in some sense "given" to Emile in the course of the romantic narrative, the *explication* of the engraving emphasizes that it is she who gives herself to him. Let us therefore turn to the engraving with Sophie's actions and intentions in mind.

Circe may give herself to Ulysses in part because she was unable to transform him, but Rousseau's version of the story in the engraving either expurgates or obscures one important element of the original story: the brandished sword. In the *Odyssey* Hermes counsels the hero to rush toward the sorceress with his sword as though he would kill

her. He does as instructed, and the fearful Circe drops to the ground and grasps his knees in supplication.[29] As with the engraving of Chiron and Achilles, Rousseau's version is considerably tamer (fig. 4.5). Ulysses holds a sword in his right hand, but he seems to be leaning on it as though it were a cane, more an old man than a fierce warrior. Ulysses' seemingly unstable stance if anything suggests vulnerability rather than ferocity. Circe has dropped her wand and potion (another parallel to Chiron's weapons and Hermes' scientific instruments lying at their feet), and she is thus disarmed like Chiron in the engraving for book II; but she is certainly not clasping Ulysses' knees in supplication. In fact, she is slightly above the stooped Ulysses, suggesting that they are equals or even that she is his superior. Her gesture seems welcoming, and she may be beckoning him to bed, as in the story of Circe and Ulysses. How close the engraving is to Rousseau's intentions we cannot know, but the gentler representation is at any rate consistent with his other deviations from classical sources.

The textual reference in book V to Circe comes immediately after the running races that connect the action back to book II: "Apropos of cakes . . ." (436). In this same context, and just before the reference to Circe, Sophie visits Emile while he is working in a carpenter's shop. Rousseau commences this episode by stating, "This is man" (437), an echo of *Ecce homo* suggesting that Emile replaces yet another formidable traditional exemplar. Sophie's mother is piqued that Emile would not leave the shop as she requested, and Sophie upbraids her, saying that he stayed out of duty and from a true respect for her. Rousseau comments: "She did not want a lover who knew no law other than hers. She wants to reign over a man whom she has not disfigured. It is thus that Circe, having debased Ulysses' companions, disdains them and gives herself only to him whom she was unable to change" (439). Immediately after this statement, our author relates how, when Emile and Jean-Jacques are late for an evening appointment due to helping an injured man, an initially worried and angry Sophie finally gives herself to Emile as her husband, having learned that he has not been so transformed by his love for her as to forget the duties of humanity (441). And forthwith Sophie, too, becomes an exemplar: "This is woman" (442).

As noted above, it is Circe's or Sophie's actions and intentions to which Rousseau points us for interpreting the engraving for book V. Immediately prior to the textual reference to the engraving of Circe, Rousseau writes: "She has that noble pride based on merit which is conscious of itself, esteems itself, and wants to be honored as it honors itself. She would disdain a heart which did not feel the full value of her heart, which did not love her for her virtues as much as, and more

4.5 Illustration for book V of *Emile*: Circe

than, for her charms, and which did not prefer its own duty to her and her to everything else." (439). Much scholarship on Rousseau's view of the education and role of women sees Sophie as inferior or educated to be inferior, perhaps because of the threat that women or sexual desires pose to men.[30] In this vein, Patricia Parker reads Circe and Ulysses as "the classical emblem of a powerful and threatening female" who must be tamed or dominated and suggests that Sophie is likewise dominated by Emile.[31] What Rousseau states about Sophie's character and her intention in giving herself to Emile at least complicates such an interpretation. Sophie is described, at least to a certain degree, as Emile's equal and even, insofar as she is his "governor," as his superior. In an apologetic note in the *Discourse on the Sciences and the Arts*, Rousseau explains: "I am quite far from thinking this ascendancy of women is in itself an evil. . . . Men will always be what is pleasing to women. If you want them to become great and virtuous, therefore, teach women what greatness of soul and virtue are" (*Sciences*, 27 n.). If the key to interpreting the engraving of Circe lies in understanding her actions and intentions, and thus Sophie's, then it appears that Sophie gives herself to Emile because she has learned what greatness of soul and virtue are and esteems them in Emile, whom she has not been able to transform.

As for Emile, the fact that he has not been transformed by Sophie is emphasized several times, including just before this sequence of stories containing the reference to Circe: "On the days when he does not see her, he is not idle and sedentary. On those days he is Emile again. He has not been transformed at all" (435). Protected by the pedagogical moly provided by his tutor, Emile is not transformed by sexual passion. But he is still vulnerable because he is now dependent on Sophie's love. Jean-Jacques warns Emile of his dependence in a speech just after Sophie has given herself to him that commences not with the spectacle of a sunrise, but instead with a sadistic query: "'What would you do if you were informed that Sophie is dead?'" (442). Emile's reaction demonstrates that he is indeed vulnerable. In his reply to Emile, Jean-Jacques refers to the subject of the engraving for book I and for *Emile* as a whole in a passage quoted above: "But dear Emile, it is in vain that I have dipped your soul in the Styx; I was not able to make it everywhere invulnerable" (443). Rousseau thus brings us full circle.

Emile's education is designed to guard him from the psychological maladies of anger, fear of death, and other passions that might destroy his wholeness and his happiness, but perhaps the most dangerous passion is sexual. Although Emile may be unperturbed by his own mortality, having fallen in love with Sophie makes him vulnerable. Emile's

passion for Sophie makes him dependent on her, and his attachment renders him vulnerable, for the soul cannot be made entirely invulnerable. Despite the apparently happy ending of the romance of Emile and Sophie, we have an intimation of our hero's Achilles' heel. Thetis, we should recall, loses her son, for he too cannot be rendered invulnerable.

Chapter 5

The Narrative Frame of the "Profession of Faith"

As I noted in chapter 3, *Emile* has relatively sparse paratextual elements, apart from the engravings I analyzed in the previous chapter, and instead the interesting textual features of the work come inside the main text itself. Notably, *Emile* contains three stand-alone sections that are explicitly separated from the main text: the "Profession of Faith of the Savoyard Vicar" in book IV and "Sophie, or the Woman" and "On Travel" (*Des voyages*) in book V. These separate sections pose interpretive challenges both on their own terms and in relation to the main text. Why, for example, did Rousseau elect to present them as separate sections? Why, insofar as they stand alone and apart from the main text, did he include them at all?

The "Profession of Faith" is particularly difficult to assess for both structural and substantive reasons. As for the structural issues, whereas "Sophie, or the Woman" and "On Travel" are largely if not fully related to the main narrative of book V, the "Profession" is not at all related to the main narrative and in fact disrupts it. Unlike the other two stand-alone sections, the "Profession" is presented by Rousseau not as a text he himself has written, but instead as a "paper" penned by someone else. Also unlike the others, the "Profession" introduces new characters who play no role in the main narrative. In short, the "Profession" seems entirely separable from *Emile*, and evidence for this might be taken from the fact that it has been published separately, though not by Rousseau himself.[1]

As for the substantive issues, the status of the religious teaching presented by the Savoyard Vicar, in terms of its relationship both to the philosophical argument of the rest of *Emile* and to Rousseau's views on theology and religion expressed elsewhere, is extremely vexed. Is the Savoyard Vicar a "mouthpiece" for Rousseau, as many interpreters have assumed? In defending himself against the condemnation of *Emile* by the archbishop of Paris and then by his native Geneva, Rousseau maintained a distance between himself and the Vicar. He insisted that he is the "editor" of the "Profession" as opposed to its "author," consistently distinguished between the Vicar and himself, and, finally, stated that he would always consider the "Profession" as "the most useful writing in the century during which I *published* it"—that is, not the one in which he *wrote* it (*Letter to Beaumont*, *CW*, 9:17, 75, 38, 46–47; *Letters Written from the Mountain*, *CW*, 9:183; see also 159n., 168n.). Similarly, also writing in defense of *Emile*, he claimed that the Vicar's profession and Julie's profession of faith in *Julie* are "sufficiently in accord that one can explain one of them by the other, and from this agreement it can be presumed with some likelihood that if the author who published the books that contain them does not adopt both of them in their entirety, he at least favors them greatly" (*Letters Written from the Mountain*, *CW*, 9:139). In what sense he "favors" these professions he does not say, nor does he explain what parts of them he himself might adopt. Finally, in the *Reveries of the Solitary Walker*, when discussing his settling of his own religious views in the face of the doubts sown by his former friends the *philosophes*, Rousseau will only say that the result was "approximately" (*à peu près*) the same as the Savoyard Vicar's (*Reveries*, *CW*, 8:22–23). In short, Rousseau was consistently cagey about whether or in what way the views expressed by the Savoyard Vicar mirrored his own.

Despite these structural and substantive issues, however, many interpreters—and readers—have assumed that Emile must receive the religious teaching propounded in the "Profession," and probably the majority of interpreters have assumed or claimed that the theological and religious views expressed by the Vicar are Rousseau's own.[2] One advantage of my attentiveness to the rhetorical and literary aspects of Rousseau's texts is anticipated by de Man in his own reading of the "Profession," which he prefaces by complaining that the separation of the philosophical and the literary has led to misinterpretations of Rousseau's works. With respect to the "Profession," he remarks on how readers mistakenly conflate Rousseau and the Savoyard Vicar, despite his use of obvious literary devices such as authorial personae and shifts in narrative voice that a literary critic would take for granted and analyze in those terms.[3] Without speaking of taking Hamlet for Shakespeare, we all learn as schoolchildren that the narrative voice of a poem cannot be assumed to be equivalent to the poet's own voice. We should not expect otherwise with the "Profession."

In this chapter I analyze the structural and rhetorical features of the "Profession," on its own terms and in relationship to the main text, to see what role it plays in the education of the reader of *Emile*. I address the substance of the "Profession" only insofar as it relates to these struc-

tural and rhetorical features, saving an interpretation of the substance of the "Profession" for another occasion. The most important features I analyze concern the narrative frame of the "Profession," both in relation to the main text of *Emile* and in itself. This narrative frame includes a number of elements, which may be grouped into two categories: first, Rousseau's introduction to the "paper" (*papier*) supposedly written by someone else and, second, the writing itself. As for Rousseau's introduction, I consider the position of the "Profession" within the text of *Emile* in order to understand its purpose and status, and then I examine Rousseau's authorial strategy in distancing himself from the "Profession." As for the "Profession" itself, it contains a number of features: first, the introduction of the dramatis personae, the young proselyte and the Savoyard Vicar; second, the dramatic setting of the Vicar's speech; third, some dialogic elements within the "Profession" itself, including most importantly remarks made by the "author" concerning the Vicar's arguments; fourth, notes that Rousseau adds to the "Profession" in his role as the supposed editor of the work.

Although considerable scholarly attention has been paid to the substance of the "Profession," there has been very little to the narrative frame.[4] One exception is Heinrich Meier, who writes: "The framing narrative is no ornamental add-on, but the part of the writing that puts the speech about religion in perspective and determines its task. It supplies information about the circumstances in which the profession of faith takes place" and information about the characters and capacities of the young man and the Vicar.[5] As I will suggest below, given Rousseau's dialogue with Plato's *Phaedrus*, in *Emile* and elsewhere, we should expect that the character of the auditor and speaker and the dramatic setting, along with the other elements, will be important for understanding what lessons are intended, both for the auditor of the "Profession" and the reader of *Emile*.

The Context of the Text within a Text

The "Profession" poses a particular challenge to the reader of *Emile*. Rousseau himself predicts the reader's reaction as he begins his approach toward it: "I foresee how many readers will be surprised at seeing me trace the whole first age of my pupil without speaking to him of religion" (*Emile*, 257).[6] Perhaps more surprising, the expectation that Rousseau as author or Jean-Jacques as tutor—for the identity of "I" here is unclear—will now speak to his pupil about religion is immediately frustrated. Instead, Rousseau inserts a paper, supposedly written by someone else (260), that includes the Savoyard Vicar's speech, that

is, the "Profession," to an unidentified young man, and not to Emile. Some eighty pages later in the Pléiade edition—or fifty pages in the Bloom edition, and a full two hundred pages in the original edition of *Emile*—the paper ends as abruptly as it began. Returning to his authorial voice, Rousseau briefly repeats his reasons for having "transcribed this writing," remains vague about what he may or may not say to Emile on the topic of religion, and returns to the project of directing his pupil's imagination in a healthy manner. Just for starters, the reader should be surprised at the sheer length of this interruption: a full third of book IV and more than a tenth of the length of *Emile* as a whole.

The Place of the "Profession" in Book IV

Rousseau undoubtedly foresees his readers' surprise at his not yet having spoken to his pupil of religion because of the centrality of religious instruction from an early age in his own times (not to speak of our own). However, if we restrict ourselves to *Emile* as it is presented to us, we might well be surprised that he is speaking—or, better, speaking of not speaking—of religion at all at this point. What we as readers are led to expect, given how Rousseau begins book IV, is a discussion of sex education, which is precisely what we get after the "Profession." Book IV marks a kind of "second birth" of the pupil as the passions are enflamed with the dawning of adolescence: "We are, so to speak, born twice: once to exist and once to live; once for our species and once for our sex" (211). Rather than stifle the passions, Rousseau explains, they must be directed so as to connect the pupil to his fellow humans, and ultimately his beloved, and to prevent the birth of corrupt, unnatural passions (esp. 212–15). The first third of book IV is devoted to making Emile sociable by directing his pity toward his fellows and educating him about human nature from afar by reading history. Perhaps significant for the placement of the "Profession," just after his discussion of studying history and just before he begins to make his approach to the "Profession," Rousseau returns to the issue of fables: "The time of mistakes is the time of fables" (248). If the censorship of the poets in book II with the critique of "The Crow and the Fox" can be seen as covert rejection of religious instruction, as I suggested in chapter 3, then perhaps the resurrection of fables in this context signals one role the "Profession" plays in taming the passions of adolescence.

Of particular importance at this point in the education of his pupil is the danger posed by the imagination. On the one hand, imagination is required for the pupil to identify with his fellows through commiseration (223, 229). On the other hand, the imagination can create new

needs beyond the ability of the individual to satisfy them. Up to this point Rousseau has therefore counseled preventing the birth of imagination, but with the awakening passions its development is inevitable. He turns this inevitability to his advantage: "The adolescent fire, far from being an obstacle to education, is the means of consummating and completing it" (233). After the interruption of the "Profession" and the return to the main narrative, Rousseau focuses in particular on the imagination in relation to sexual passion. The tutor's plan is to direct Emile's imagination toward an imaginary beloved: "I shall make him moderate by making him fall in love" (327). The placement of the "Profession" in book IV therefore suggests that one intention Rousseau has for the religious teaching delivered by the Savoyard Vicar is to serve as a prophylactic: to moderate the developing passions, especially sexual passion. But for whom is this prophylactic necessary or appropriate?

Approaching the "Profession"

The "Profession" interrupts the main narrative of the text, and in fact Rousseau approaches it with a series of abrupt shifts in narrative voice and subject, as though he were intentionally destabilizing the reading experience. The disruptions commence just a few pages before he introduces the "Profession." There he steps back from his educational project to engage in an extended dialogue with his skeptical reader, a narrative technique we have seen him employ repeatedly. I examined this passage in chapter 3, so here I will address only the parts necessary for the present purpose. The substantive context in which this dialogue occurs is Rousseau's argument that *amour-propre*, which typically degenerates into vanity, can be extended to other beings and be transformed into a virtue if properly managed (252–53). Since we do not ordinarily see this healthy transformation, Rousseau anticipates incredulity on the reader's part. He therefore abruptly addresses his readers:

> I go forward, attracted by the force of things but without gaining credibility in the judgment of my readers. For a long while they have seen me in the land of chimeras. I always see them in the land of prejudices. . . . I know that they persist in imagining only what they see, and therefore they will take the young man whom I evoke to be an imaginary and fantastic being because he differs from those with whom they compare him. . . . This is not the man of man; it is the man of nature. Assuredly he must be very alien to their eyes. (253)

Having written this, he then delivers imagined speeches of disbelief on the part of the reader, for example: "'Nothing of what you suppose

exists.'" Then he proposes a comparison of pupils, another technique we have seen him utilize a number of times: "Now if in accordance with this method," that is, of investigating human nature, "you follow a young man from childhood . . . whom do you think he will most resemble—my pupil or yours?" (254). Finally, he explains: "Although I want to form the man of nature, the object is not, for all that, to make him a savage and to relegate him to the depths of the woods." This natural man in society must learn to feel and think without being engulfed in the "social whirlpool" (255).

Rather than discussing how the "man of nature" can be introduced to society without becoming swept away, which is precisely what he does discuss after the "Profession," however, Rousseau suddenly embarks on a discussion of metaphysics. It is this unprepared discussion that immediately precedes the introduction to the "Profession." The discussion begins with him addressing readers in the imperative mood: "Consider also that since we are limited by our faculties to things which can be sensed, we provide almost no hold for abstract notions of philosophy and purely intellectual ideas." After stating that in order to ascend to these ideas we must "separate ourselves from the body," he turns to the divinity: "The incomprehensible Being who embraces everything, who gives motion to the world and forms the whole system of beings, is neither visible to our eyes nor palpable to our hands. He escapes all our senses. The work is revealed, but the worker is hidden." The precipitous ascent from material to immaterial substances produces either materialism or superstition, he warns, and then he offers a brief natural history of religion. Primitive humans animated the entire universe with beings whose action they believed they felt, he explains, until they began to recognize a single god by generalizing their ideas and ascending to a first cause of the universe and to the idea of a "substance." With this idea glimpsed, one can see how the notion of two substances, one material and the other immaterial, might arise. In this way, then, Rousseau explains the origin of metaphysical dualism. Nonetheless, his explanation is presented entirely either in the mode of conjectural history or with interrogatives, the passive voice, and impersonal constructions; he does not make any substantive claims in this context in his own name. Rather, he emphasizes the difficulty of conceiving of these two substances, of the divine nature, ideas of creation and annihilation, eternity, omnipotence, and so on, and the pervasive tendency of children and men to anthropomorphism (256–57). In short, the abrupt shifts in narration are compounded with uncertainty concerning the subject under discussion and its truth value.

With this propaedeutic account of the difficulties of metaphysical and theological inquiry in place, Rousseau suddenly swivels back to

his reader and his pupil: "I foresee how many readers will be surprised at seeing me trace the whole first age of my pupil without speaking to him of religion" (257). As noted earlier, by anticipating the surprise of the reader Rousseau acknowledges that ordinarily religion was central to the education of children of his time. However, he argues against the common practice by stating that premature religious instruction produces erroneous ideas of the divinity and fanaticism (257–9). Rousseau gives an example through a brief story about a child he supposedly saw in Switzerland whose curiosity about the mysterious divinity turned him into a fanatic rather than a believer. He then contrasts this child to "my pupil": "But let us fear nothing of the kind for my Emile, who constantly refuses to pay attention to everything beyond his reach and listens to things he does not understand with the most profound indifference" (259). Emile's appearance in the text here will nonetheless be brief.

Given that "the faith of children and of many men is a question of geography" (258), Rousseau states that a child must be raised in his father's religion and introduced to the supposed arguments on behalf of that religion, arguments whose strength "depends absolutely on the country where they are propounded" (260). But what about Emile, who has no father? Rousseau invites the collaboration of the reader in the project by using the first-person plural:

> But we who claim to shake off the yoke of opinion in everything, we who want to grant nothing to authority, we who want to teach nothing to our Emile which he could not learn by himself in every country, in what religion shall we raise him? To what sect shall we join the man of nature? The answer is quite simple, it seems to me. We shall join him to neither this one nor that one, but we shall put him in a position to choose the one to which the best use of his reason ought to lead him. (260)

And then Rousseau abruptly drops Emile, returning to him only after a very long absence filled by the "Profession," and when he does return to Emile he once again invites the collaboration of the reader by speaking of "our pupil" (314). During the lengthy intermission the reader is left to his own devices.

Having bid adieu to Emile and the reader, Rousseau turns to brave the storm alone. He quotes Horace:

> I walk on fires
> Covered by deceitful cinders.
>
> ———
>
> [Incendo per ignes
> Suppositos cineri doloso.][7]

Rousseau changes Horace's verse to the first-person singular (*Incendo*) from the original second-person singular (*Incendis*), as noted by Bloom and by the editor of the Pléiade edition (who seems to assume it is a mistake).[8] The alteration makes sense, however, given Rousseau's having taken responsibility for what is about to happen. Or, rather, given his abdication of responsibility, for he makes another unexpected shift.

The Author of the "Profession" and the Question of Interpretive Authority

Preparing to set foot on hot coals, Rousseau addresses us: "Readers, do not fear from me precautions unworthy of a friend of the truth. I shall never forget my motto" (260). Lest the reader does not know it or has forgotten it, I will provide it: *Vitam impendere vero*—"To consecrate one's life to the truth."[9] Strangely, then, after declaring that his love of truth is consistent with distrusting his judgments as potentially mistaken, he takes another unexpected turn.

> Instead of telling you [*vous*] here what I think for my own part [*de mon chef*], I shall tell you what a man worthier than I thought. I guarantee the truth of the facts which are going to be reported. They really happened to the author of the paper I am going to transcribe. It is up to you to see if useful reflections can be drawn from it about the subject with which it deals. I am not propounding to you the sentiment of another or my own as a rule. I am offering it to you for examination. (260)

With this said, Rousseau begins to transcribe the "paper," the text in quotation marks throughout as though it were someone else's writing.

What is going on here? Few readers will likely be persuaded that someone other than Rousseau is the actual author of this paper. If he is not being truthful in this respect, his allusion to his motto, which might be characterized as gratuitously proffered, seems an affront or a deliberate provocation. Assuming he is in fact the author, why does he distance himself from the paper in introducing it? This distancing is usually taken as an attempt to evade responsibility for the unorthodox theological and religious content of the "Profession." The authorities who condemned the work certainly believed this was his intention. There are nonetheless a number of reasons for thinking it was not. First, Rousseau himself denied this was his aim, and it seems implausible that he believed he would have been successful if it were. In fact, as mentioned earlier, in the very course of denying this was his intention, he insisted on distinguishing between the "author" of the transcribed writing and himself as its "editor." Given that he had already been condemned for having published the "Profession," why not own

up to his authorship? Surely continuing to maintain the fiction that he was not the author would be no more successful than it had been in the first place. Second, and more important, doing so would be inconsistent with his behavior otherwise, for he published other controversial works under his own name. Indeed, for an era of almost universally anonymous or pseudonymous works, Rousseau was unusual for *insisting* on proclaiming his authorship.[10] Such is the case with the work under examination, for in defending *Emile* he admits to the archbishop of Paris that the philosophical position he advanced in his own name was intentionally in direct contradiction with the doctrine of original sin (*Letter to Beaumont*, *CW*, 9:28–31). If he is willing to admit that in his own name, why not acknowledge that he is the author of the "Profession? In what way, then, could it be somehow true that he is not the author of this paper and that he is not taking "precautions unworthy of a friend of the truth"?

My focus on the education of the reader may provide some fresh answers. Returning to the passage quoted above, then, let us begin by noting what he says to his readers: "It is up to you to see if useful reflections can be drawn from it" and "I am offering it to you for examination." Rousseau cedes authority to the reader to examine and judge. In this light, Rousseau distances himself not so much from the content of the writing as from *judging* it in his own name.[11] A contemporary of Rousseau's, David Hume, employs a similar strategy in the set of four essays on philosophical characters—"The Epicurean," "The Stoic," "The Platonist," and "The Sceptic"—which he does not present in his own authorial voice. Like Rousseau in the "Profession," Hume even adds notes to the essays in his own voice. Although most readers see him as most sympathetic to the skeptic, he leaves it to the reader to make that judgment.[12]

Rousseau's abstention from exercising his authority as the author and instead investing the reader with this authority parallels the "Profession" itself. First, the Savoyard Vicar takes it upon himself to interrogate his religious convictions without appeal to any other authority (see especially 266–69). Second, the Vicar likewise repeatedly asks his auditor to judge the contents of his speech for himself (e.g., 266, 294–95). Like the Vicar, when Rousseau returns to the main narrative he claims that the "Profession" is meant as an example for examination, not as an authority (313–14). The line of interpretation I am suggesting is supported by Rousseau's response to the misreading of the text by an actual reader. In the *Letter to Beaumont*, Rousseau takes his critic to task for incorrectly citing a passage as coming from the "Profession" rather than the "body of the book," as he terms it, and then, having corrected

the archbishop's mistake, he takes responsibility for that passage in his own name (*Letter to Beaumont*, *CW*, 9:28–31). In sum, the "Profession" appropriately stands apart from *Emile* because it is not presented as being the fruit of what Rousseau in the preface refers to as the "systematic part" of the work (34), of which he is most assuredly attempting to persuade the reader.

In this light, then, we can read Rousseau's introduction to the paper containing the "Profession" not so much as distancing himself from the text as doubling his authorial voice, much as he doubles himself to serve as Emile's tutor. If so, then he—Jean-Jacques Rousseau, author of *Emile*—both is and is not the author of this paper. A detail in the passage would seem to suggest such an interpretation, for Rousseau in the authorial "I" states that he is not propounding to "you" (*vous*) "the sentiment of *another or my own* as a rule." This formulation would make sense if he is somehow both "another" and "himself." As the author of *Emile*, Rousseau states that he guarantees the truth of the "facts": "They really happened to the author of the paper I am going to transcribe" (260). Of course, the only sure guarantee of these facts would be that the author is Rousseau himself, especially since these facts include information about the mental and emotional state of the author, as recalled thirty years later, that could be known only by the person relating them. As we shall see in the next section examining the dramatic introduction to the "Profession," Rousseau is coy about whether or not the author is indeed himself. At any rate, such an interpretation would once again be consistent with the idea that he is doubling himself as author. Finally, whereas he guarantees the truth of the "facts" to be reported, Rousseau gives no such assurances regarding the content of the "Profession." Part of the education of the readers is to examine that for themselves.

Before turning to the dramatic introduction to the "Profession," let me briefly step away from my focus on what the reader of *Emile* learns from the text itself to what Rousseau's interpreters know from his other works concerning his views on telling the truth. Recall that he refers to his motto about consecrating one's life to truth just before transcribing the "paper" containing the "Profession." Rousseau's self-declared dedication to the truth is a complicated matter, to say the least. In defense of *Emile* after it was condemned, principally because of the "Profession," Rousseau explained that he felt himself obliged to tell the truth only in matters he considered "useful," that is, useful to his readers or to the public (*Letter to Beaumont*, *CW*, 9:52). Similarly, much later in the *Reveries* he devotes the "Fourth Promenade" to an analysis of how difficult it turned out to live in accordance with his motto and explains there that what would normally be called lying is justified if the untruth is either a

matter of indifference or a matter of utility, a kind of "noble lie" or what he terms a "fable" (*Reveries*, *CW*, 8:28–40). Revealingly, the subject of the "Third Promenade," which he connects to the "Fourth" by beginning the former and ending the latter with the same saying by Solon, is the skepticism he suffered by associating with the *philosophes* and the resulting establishment of his beliefs in a manner that was "approximately" like the "Profession" (*Reveries*, *CW*, 8:22–23).[13] We therefore have later, external reasons to wonder whether the contents of the "Profession" are less true than useful in some way. But what if we restrict ourselves to *Emile*? One might point to the numerous occasions on which Jean-Jacques as tutor deceives Emile or at least structures his educational environment in such a way that amounts to not revealing the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Why should we suppose that Rousseau as author is above doing so when educating his reader?

The Dramatic Introduction to the "Profession"

"'Thirty years ago in an Italian city a young expatriate found himself reduced to utter destitution'" (260). So begins what I am calling the dramatic introduction to the "Profession." This dramatic introduction is rather lengthy—seven pages in the Pléiade edition, five in Bloom's. We must, I think, assume that Rousseau—and for simplicity's sake I will refer to him as the author—presents information to the reader that is necessary for interpreting the "Profession" and its function in the text. Much of the dramatic introduction is devoted to introducing the two characters, the young proselyte and the Savoyard Vicar. If we recall the multiple echoes of Plato's *Phaedrus* in *Emile*, and in Rousseau's writings more generally, then we should expect that these details concerning the character particularly of the auditor of the speech, the youth, are important if Rousseau is respecting the Socratic argument that speeches, as opposed to writing, can be tailored to the character and capacity of a given auditor so as to have the intended rhetorical and pedagogical effect. Indeed, just after the "Profession" Rousseau addresses the subject of rhetoric and the need to adapt speeches to suit their recipients (319–23). Later I will examine this discussion of rhetoric in relation to the dramatic setting of the "Profession."

The Young Proselyte

What do we learn about the character of the youth? Speaking of the youth in the third person, the author of this paper recounts how he left his country and found himself in an almshouse for proselytes, where he

was introduced to strange doctrines and still stranger morals. The new doctrines provoke doubts he had hitherto not entertained. As for the novel morals, he had "almost became the victim" of the corrupt morals of the almshouse and was indignant at being punished for not succumbing. He asks the reader of the paper to picture the scene: "'Those who know how much the first taste of violence and injustice arouses a young heart without experience will be able to picture the condition of his own heart. Tears of rage flowed from his eyes, indignation choked him'" (260–62). This passage is strikingly similar to the story Rousseau tells in book I of having witnessed an infant struck by his nurse and exploding in tears of rage and indignation (65–66), a story I examined at length in chapter 3 as an example of his teaching the reader to distinguish corrupt from uncorrupt children. The author asks the reader to "picture" his indignation to elicit sympathy, but the reader who has encountered Rousseau's depiction of the indignant infant might also glean something about the youth's character.

While he may not have succumbed to the corrupt morals of the almshouse, the boy's passions are nonetheless already corrupt. He believes he has escaped from vice only to return to indigence, but his psychic resources are as thin as his pecuniary ones: "'Vain was the advantage of his youth; his ideas, absorbed from novels, spoiled everything.'" His romantic notions, perhaps of romantic love and heroic virtue, are poor resources for his condition. Happily, he is taken in by the Vicar, who saw that "'ill fortune had already dried up the young man's heart, that opprobrium and contempt had beaten down his courage, and that his pride [*fierté*], changed into bitter spite, took men's injustice and hardness only as proof of the viciousness of nature and the chimerical character of virtue. He had seen that religion served only as the mask of interest and sacred worship only as the safeguard of hypocrisy'" (262). Having seen through appearances, the boy thought he glimpsed the corruption hiding beneath.

The author explains of the youth that, although he was not without a noble nature, "'incredulity and poverty, stifling his nature little by little, were leading him rapidly to his destruction and heading him toward the morals of a tramp and the morality of an atheist.'" Significantly for the placement of the "Profession" in book IV, he is characterized as being sexually awakened: "'He was at that happy age when the blood is in fermentation. . . . A native shame and a timid character took the place of constraint and prolonged for him this period in which you keep your pupil with so much care'" (262–63). Note the inserted address to the reader of the paper, an unidentified "you" (*vous*)—a detail to which I will return. At any rate, at this point the boy is approximately the same

age as Emile. Finally, before turning to the remedy, the author identifies the disease:

> "What was most difficult to destroy in me was a proud misanthropy, a certain bitterness against the rich and happy of the world, as though they were such at my expense and their supposed happiness had been usurped from mine. The mad vanity of youth, which revolts against humiliation, gave me only too much of an inclination to that angry humor, and the *amour-propre* my mentor tried to awaken in me, by leading me to pride, rendered men even more vile in my eyes and succeeded only in adding contempt to my hatred of them." (265)

In short, the boy is, if not beyond redemption, corrupt.

Let us first compare this description of the boy's character to Emile. To be blunt, the young proselyte is no exemplar of the natural goodness of man. His passions and faculties have been prematurely awakened and corrupted. The similarity of the boy's indignant reaction to the unjust treatment he received to the crying infant of book already suggests the contrast to Emile. There is no need to dwell on other contrasts; one example will suffice. The corrupt youth has seen through the appearances of society and his fellows, and the result is his realization concerning "'the viciousness of nature and the chimerical character of virtue'" and a "'proud misanthropy'" of jealousy, hatred, and contempt. By contrast, when Emile is taught to see through appearances through his reading of history, the result is the contrary: "Let him know that man is naturally good; let him feel it; let him judge his neighbor by himself. But let him see that society depraves and perverts man" (237). Instead of feeling jealousy, hatred, and contempt for his fellows, Emile will pity them. If we extend Rousseau's invitation to compare pupils—"my pupil" and "your pupil"—to Emile and the youth of the story, we cannot help but see the boy as a vicious product of an education not directed by the doctrine of the natural goodness of man.

Let us now compare the experience of the youth to the lessons Rousseau promotes in the education of the reader of *Emile*. As we have seen, throughout his works and in *Emile* too, one of the principal lessons Rousseau offers to his reader is learning to distinguish between appearance and reality. The main intended result of this education is to teach the reader the same lesson Emile receives in the passage quoted above: that man is naturally good but he appears to be evil owing to the corruption he suffers in society. The youth enacts the "Illumination of Vincennes" and the education of the reader of *Emile*, but with the opposite outcome: the scales having fallen from his eyes concerning the appearances of virtue and religion, he believes he sees the self-interestedness

and depravity of human nature. The boy requires a stiff dose of the cure provided to the reader by the author of *Emile*.

Finally, with regard to the author's relating what happened to him thirty years ago, Rousseau suddenly breaks the fourth wall of the narrative voice by having the supposed author address the reader, or at least *a* reader: "'I am tired of speaking in the third person. And the effort is quite superfluous, for you are well aware, dear fellow citizen, that this unhappy fugitive is myself. I believe myself far enough from the disorders of my youth to dare to admit them, and the hand which drew me away from these disorders deserves, at the expense of a bit of shame, that I render at least some honor to his benefaction'" (264). Strangely, despite the break in the narrative, this address to a reader is still in quotation marks, that is, still contained in the paper Rousseau is supposedly transcribing. The only change in the narrative voice is that the author henceforth speaks of himself in the first rather than the third person. The fourth wall, it turns out, yet stands.

Most interpreters have assumed that in admitting that this unhappy fugitive is "'myself,'" Rousseau is acknowledging that the youth is himself and therefore that he is in fact the author of the paper.[14] We have some reason for rejecting this hypothesis, at least in its most straightforward version. First, if Rousseau is the author, then who is the "'dear fellow citizen'" to whom this admission is directed? If Rousseau were simply admitting his authorship, such an address would be superfluous. The most obvious candidate for the "dear fellow citizen" is the "Citizen of Geneva" himself, author of *Emile*. This would also make sense of the other brief address to the reader—"you"—noted above, where the author notes how "'you keep your pupil'" sexually innocent with so much effort, with "you" ostensibly referring to Rousseau as author or Jean-Jacques as tutor and with "your pupil" referring to Emile (263). Second, after concluding the "Profession" and returning to the main text, Rousseau still maintains the stance that he has transcribed the paper, which would be odd if he had acknowledged he was the author. Third, and similarly, if he had admitted his authorship, why would he continue to distinguish between this paper and the "body of the work" when later defending it?

If the most straightforward version of the hypothesis that Rousseau has just admitted he is the author of this paper has to be rejected, the interpretation advanced above that Rousseau is doubling his role as author does make sense of the address. As for addressing his "'dear fellow citizen,'" if Rousseau is that "'dear fellow citizen,'" then the author of the paper would be his alter ego, *a* citizen of Geneva if not *the* "Citizen of Geneva." Likewise, maintaining his authorial distance as author

of *Emile* from the "Profession" and its dramatic introduction, both in the work itself and in defense of it, would make better sense. Interestingly, then, the address to the reader Rousseau makes in his own name in introducing the separate paper, abdicating his own authority and inviting the reader to examine its contents, parallels the address by the author of the paper to a reader within the dramatic introduction, paying homage to the Savoyard Vicar as a worthy man but not asserting any authority to judge. What he states about the "Profession" in defense of its condemnation buttresses this interpretation: "In transcribing the particular writing . . . I warn the reader again that he has to be wary of my judgments, that it is for him to see if he can derive some useful reflections from this writing; that I propose to him neither someone else's sentiment nor my own as a rule; that I present it to him to examine" (*Letters Written from the Mountain*, *CW*, 9:183).

Finally, before turning to the Savoyard Vicar, if we avail ourselves of later, external evidence then we would learn that many of the details concerning the young proselyte are in fact autobiographical. As Rousseau later related in the *Confessions*, he was an expatriate who converted to Catholicism in order to have bread, stayed at an almshouse for proselytes where he was sexually propositioned, and had absorbed ideas from novels that inflamed his imagination, among other things. He also shares a number of character traits with the youth, including indignation, pride, misanthropy, and premature sexual awakening. Finally, he relates that he met some friendly clergymen after whom he states he modeled the Savoyard Vicar (*Confessions*, *CW*, 5:50–58, 100).[15] He does not discuss receiving anything like the "Profession." We may conclude that Rousseau at least models the young proselyte on himself.

The Savoyard Vicar

If the young proselyte takes the place of Emile, the Savoyard Vicar substitutes for the tutor Jean-Jacques.[16] Unlike Jean-Jacques, who emerges like Athena from the head of Zeus, however, the Vicar is given a history and character. We learn biographical and other details about the Vicar both from the dramatic introduction, in the voice of the author of the paper, and from the "Profession" itself, in the voice of the Vicar. Within the dramatic introduction, the author describes the Vicar as a poor Savoyard who fell out of favor with his bishop owing to "'a youthful adventure.'" He does not know, or at least does not relate, what this misadventure was. Also like the youth, the Vicar leaves his native country to seek a living abroad, in Italy. After a turn serving as the tutor to the son of a prince's minister, he decided he preferred poverty to

dependence. Thinking his character alone would recommend him, "'he cherished the illusion that he would return to his bishop's good graces and obtain some little parish in the mountains'" (262). This remark about the "illusion" the Vicar cherishes foreshadows the Vicar's own account of the disillusionment he experienced at the hands of the church authorities.

After describing how he had seen beneath the appearances of religion and virtue to the wickedness of human nature, as related above, the author notes that what he found particularly remarkable about the Vicar was that there was no gap between appearance and reality with the man: "'What struck me most was seeing in my worthy master's private life virtue without hypocrisy, humanity without weakness, speech that was always straight and simple, and conduct always in conformity with this speech.'" His "observations" of the Vicar encouraged the youth not to hide from him. We once again see a parallel to the education of the reader of *Emile* in distinguishing appearance and reality. Curiously, however, the youth soon learns that appearance and reality are not, in fact, always the same for the Vicar. If his behavior was always consistent in private and public, the opinions he expressed were not: "'But what was I to think when I heard him sometimes approve dogmas contrary to those of the Roman Church and show little esteem for all its ceremonies? I would have believed him a disguised Protestant if I had not observed him to be less faithful to these very practices by which he seemed to set little store'" (264–65). In fact, in concluding his "Profession," the Vicar urges the youth to return to the faith of his fathers, which he—a Catholic priest, no less—calls "of all the religions on earth . . . the one which has the purest morality and which is the most satisfactory to reason" (311). Yet the author relates that the Vicar was punctilious in fulfilling his priestly duties "when there were no witness as when in the public eye." He did not know how to "judge these contradictions." The Vicar's private behavior was irreproachable, he continues, with one exception, namely, "'the failing which had formerly brought on his disgrace, and of which he was not too well corrected'" (265). Now we learn that the author knows what the Vicar's failing was, though the reader does not yet.

The Vicar provides more information regarding himself, including about his failing, within the "Profession." In the brief autobiographical remarks that precede his theological ruminations, the Vicar tells how he was born poor and a peasant and how his parents decided he would earn his bread by becoming a priest. He did as he was told and took his vows. After remarking, "I know by my experience that conscience persists in following the order of nature," a remark that will be developed

as a central doctrine of the "Profession," the Vicar reveals his failing: in taking an oath of celibacy he was defying nature and, out of respect for the sanctity of marriage, he limited himself to sleeping only with unmarried women (267). What the author calls the Vicar's "'failing,'" the Vicar himself calls his "resolve," a resolution he believes to be in accordance with nature and conscience. It was this resolve that led to his disgrace and exile. Similar to the youth he is addressing, his experience with what he sees as injustice leads the Vicar into disillusionment and doubt concerning the "opinions" he had received and the "principles" he had adopted: "I was in that frame of mind of uncertainty and doubt that Descartes demands for the quest for truth" (266–67). And so his examination of theological principles commences.

Toward the conclusion of the "Profession," as he wraps up his critical discussion of religious doctrines concerning miracles, revelation, Scripture, and the like, the Vicar provides further information about himself that relates to the theme of appearance and reality we have seen repeatedly arise. He relates that he remains in a state of "involuntary skepticism" concerning doctrinal and other subjects but claims that his doubts do not hinder him from the essence of devotion: "The essential worship is that of the heart." However, as a priest he has rites to perform: "I perform with all possible exactness the tasks prescribed to me. My conscience would reproach me for voluntarily failing to do so on any point." He follows all the rites, recites the Scripture, and omits not the briefest word or ceremony. While he does these things with sincerity and veneration, he also does them without believing any of it (308–9). Since the youth is the sole person to whom the Vicar has admitted this (310), his flock must assume that he believes the doctrines he preaches and the ceremonies he conducts. They take appearance to be reality, but the youth now knows that there is a gap between reality and appearance.

Is the Vicar a liar? A contemporary critic of *Emile*, a bishop (and future president of the National Assembly), posed the problem bluntly: "Here we have, not a Protestant, but a deist dressed up as a Catholic priest who performs all of his functions and who . . . does not omit a single action, a single syllable of a liturgy of which he does not believe a single word. . . . How is it not obvious that he discredits his entire doctrine by making its apostle a libertine priest, one who combines deism with the mass, and the most remarkable of hypocrites [*fourbes*]?"[17]

Insofar as he leads his flock to believe that he himself believes the doctrines he expounds and the ceremonies he performs, he is at minimum guilty of a lie of omission. If he performs these rites with a spirit of devotion, then he does not necessarily seem guilty of a lie of commission (although in the bishop's eyes he would be). Likewise, assuming

we believe him, since he states only that he does not affirm the truth of the doctrines he preaches and does not affirmatively state that he believes them to be untrue, he is not guilty of a lie of commission in this case either. Put differently, he is not a hypocrite, at least not in the strict sense of the word. Whatever the gap between appearance and reality in the Vicar's behavior, he nonetheless practices what he preaches in following his conscience or the voice of nature as the guide for his conduct, at least as he interprets the voice speaking to him. However, in following nature he is sometimes led to disobey the law, as in the case of his breaking his vow of celibacy to sleep with unmarried women. In this case, outwardly he appears to follow the laws or rites of the church he serves, but inwardly he does otherwise.[18] Oddly, the Vicar's inconsistency is based on a certain consistency. We might characterize him as a sort of sincere liar.

The Vicar's attitude toward the truth turns out to be similar to what Rousseau says about himself in this regard, as mentioned above. My task here is not to examine the substance of the Vicar's arguments or their relationship to what Rousseau writes elsewhere, in his own name or otherwise, about God and religion. But a remark on the subject is perhaps appropriate here regarding what the Vicar reveals about his less-than-total frankness. Namely, even assuming that he is being fully honest in his speech to the young proselyte about his views, the fact that Rousseau puts this speech into the mouth of someone who admits he conceals his true views from others at the very least complicates any interpretation that takes them to be Rousseau's own, even "approximately" so. At any rate, Rousseau leaves it to readers of the "Profession" to judge the Vicar's arguments for themselves.

The Dramatic Setting of the "Profession"

The dramatic introduction to the "Profession" concludes with a description of the setting of the speech the Savoyard Vicar will deliver to the youth. The setting is a summer sunrise looking over the Po with the Alps crowning the landscape. The language used by the author is highly emotive:

> "The rays of the rising sun already grazed the plains and, projecting on the fields long shadows of the trees, the vineyards, and the houses, enriched with countless irregularities of light the most beautiful scene [*tableau*] which can strike the human eye. One would have said that nature displayed all its magnificence to our eyes in order to present them with the text for our conversation [*entretiens*]. It was there that after

having contemplated these objects in silence for some time, the man of peace spoke to me as follows." (266)

The passage is also highly visual: the rising sun, shadows, light, a scene or *tableau*, the human eye, "our eyes." Nature becomes a "text" to be read as a template for a speech. The questions of writing versus speech in relation to the appropriate audience should remind us again of Plato's *Phaedrus*. Just as Rousseau details the setting of the Vicar's speech, so too does Plato describe the setting of Socrates' summertime conversation with Phaedrus, a lovely spot beneath plane and willow trees by a babbling stream, with a chorus of cicadas serenading them.[19] How does the dramatic setting of the Vicar's speech relate to the content and intended effect of the "Profession," both on its auditor and on the reader?

We have encountered a sunrise scene already in book III of *Emile*, and we will also encounter a similar scene later in book IV after the "Profession" concludes; and these two scenes will help us understand the rhetorical thrust of the dramatic setting of the "Profession."[20] Before turning to them, I want to note that Rousseau writes elsewhere of how the spectacle of nature speaks differently to different individuals. In the *Letter to Beaumont*, responding to the archbishop's claim that "the great spectacle of nature" obviously proclaims the creator and governor of the world, Rousseau writes: "The order of the universe, admirable as it is, does not strike all eyes equally" (*Beaumont*, *CW*, 9:40). In *Julie* he illustrates the difference in responses to the spectacle of nature of the pious Julie and the atheist Wolmar: "Imagine Julie out walking with her husband; she admiring, in the rich and brilliant adornment which the earth displays, the work and gifts of the Author of the creation; he seeing nothing in all this but a fortuitous combination in which nothing is linked to anything except by blind force. . . . Alas! She says affectedly; the wonders of nature, so alive, so animate for us, are dead in the eyes of the unfortunate Wolmar, and in this great harmony of beings, where everything speaks of God in so sweet a voice, he perceives nothing but an eternal silence" (V.5; *CW*, 6:484).

The sunrise scene in book III involves a lesson in cosmography, and I analyzed it in chapter 3 as an example of the challenge Rousseau poses of discriminating the "true" and "false" versions of his pupil. As I noted there, book III is devoted to teaching the elements of the sciences, with the central lesson being that he must only be taught what is *useful*. The mantra the student learns to repeat—"What is it useful for?"—and the frontispiece depicting Hermes engraving the elements of the sciences on a column are among the features of the text that recall Plato's

Phaedrus. In order to teach his pupil about astronomy and geography, the tutor takes him one evening to observe the setting sun: "One fine evening we go for a walk in a suitable place where a broad, open horizon permits the setting sun to be fully seen." The next day they return to the same spot to witness the rising sun, but the tutor-narrator temporarily forgets the strictly utilitarian purposes of these observations and lapses into emotive prose:

> We see it announcing itself from afar by the fiery arrows it launches ahead of it. The blaze grows; the east appears to be wholly in flames. By their glow one expects the star for a long time before it reveals itself. At every instant one believes that he sees it appear. Finally one sees it. A shining point shoots out like lightning and immediately fills all of space. The veil of darkness is drawn back and falls. Man recognizes his habitat and finds it embellished. . . . The birds in chorus join together in concert to greet the father of life. . . . There is here a half-hour of enchantment which no man can resist. So great, so fair, so delicious a spectacle leaves no one cold. (168)

But then Rousseau in his role as author steps back from his impassioned tutor-narrator.

> Full of the enthusiasm he feels, the master wants to communicate it to the child. He believes he moves the child by making him attentive to the sensations by which he, the master, is himself moved. Pure stupidity! It is in man's heart that the life of nature's spectacle exists. To see it, one must feel it. The child perceives the objects, but he cannot persuade the relations linking them; he cannot hear the sweet harmony of their concord. For that is needed experience he has not acquired. (168–69)

In particular, the child does not have the emotional experience required for such associations. He does not know the "accents of love and pleasure." Nor does he know the divinity: "Finally, how can he be touched by the beauty of nature's spectacle, if he does not know the hand responsible for adorning it?" (169).[21]

The dramatic setting and poetic language used to describe this sunrise scene are strikingly similar to the dramatic setting of the "Profession." Here it is the older man, the tutor, who would communicate his enthusiasm to the youth, his pupil. The boy will not be able to feel or understand the emotions and thoughts inspired by the sunrise if, like Emile, he has been educated according to the proper "march of nature." In the case of the "Profession," it is the youth who describes the sunrise in highly emotional language. Although he is recalling the scene thirty years later, it seems from his description that even as a boy he

was capable of feeling the emotions he describes. For example, unlike the youth at the beginning of book III, who would be about twelve and does not know the "accents of love and pleasure" (165, 169), the young proselyte of the "Profession" is sexually awakened. Similarly, unlike Emile, he has had religious instruction and so knows something, if confusedly or superstitiously, about the "hand responsible" for "adorning" "nature's spectacle." If the tutor's desire to communicate what he feels to his pupil is "pure stupidity," the dramatic setting of the "Profession" is precisely intended to provoke an emotional response in the auditor to aid in persuading him of the speech's content. The dramatic setting would not be appropriate for persuading Emile, but it is suitable for the young proselyte.

The other scene involving the spectacle of nature does involve Emile, and it comes after the "Profession" in book IV. Rousseau sets up the episode with a discussion of the imagination. So far he has worked to delay Emile's imagination to prevent his corruption and especially the corruption of his sexual passion, but now he will use this very imagination for the same purpose: "The true moment of nature comes at last" (316). He begins the episode with an elegiac introduction: "There are periods in human life which are made never to be forgotten. The period of the instruction of which I am speaking is such a time for Emile. . . . Let us engrave it in his memory in such a way that it will never be effaced" (321). The language of "engraving" on the memory should recall the frontispiece to book III of Hermes, and once again we are reminded of Plato's *Phaedrus*. We should not be surprised that Rousseau embarks on a discussion of rhetoric before Jean-Jacques makes his speech to Emile.

Turning to the question of rhetoric, Rousseau in his authorial voice writes: "One of the errors of our age is to use reason in too unadorned a form, as if men were all mind. In neglecting the language of signs that speak to the imagination, the most energetic of languages has been lost. . . . It is with this language that one persuades and makes others act" (321). As elsewhere, he explains the art of persuasion with a comparison of the ancients and the moderns.[22] "I observe that in the modern age men no longer have a hold on one another except by force or by self-interest; the ancients, by contrast, acted much more by persuasion and by the affections of the soul because they did not neglect the language of signs. All their covenants took place with solemnity in order to make them more inviolable. Before force was established, the gods were the magistrates of mankind," and their oaths were taken with all of nature as witness to them (321). The Savoyard Vicar acted as a good ancient would have, evoking the rising sun to serve as a witness to his speech to the young proselyte: "What the ancients accomplished with

eloquence was prodigious. But that eloquence did not consist solely in fine, well-ordered speeches, and never did it have more effect that when the orator spoke least. What was said most vividly was expressed not by words but by signs." Here Rousseau gives examples of visual eloquence: Thrasybulus and Tarquin cutting off the tops of poppies, Diogenes walking before Zeno, and so on (322). Rousseau terms this discussion of rhetoric a "digression," which, "like many others, gradually carries me far from my subject, and my wanderings are too frequent to admit of being both long and tolerable. I therefore return to my subject" (323). But what if this "digression" is in fact the preparation for "my subject"?

Indeed, Jean-Jacques now applies these lessons given by Rousseau to their imaginary pupil:

> Therefore, even after the preparations of which I have spoken, I shall be very careful not to go all of a sudden to Emile's room and pompously make a long speech to him about the subject in which I want to instruct him. I shall begin by moving his imagination. I shall choose the time, the place, and the objects most favorable to the impression I want to make. I shall, so to speak, call all of nature as a witness to our conversations. I shall bring the Eternal Being, who is the Author of nature, to testify to the truth of my speech. I shall take Him as judge between Emile and me. I shall mark the place where we are—the rocks, the woods, and the mountains surrounding us shall be monuments of his promises and mine. I shall put in my eyes, my accent, and my gestures the enthusiasm and the ardor that I want to inspire in him. (323)

Jean-Jacques now proves himself to be a good ancient as well. He does not specifically describe a sunrise, although he seems to allude to something like one when he states that he will bring "the Author of nature" to testify to the truth of his speech. In any case, the language he uses echoes the "Profession." In introducing the paper containing the "Profession," Rousseau tells his readers it is up to them to draw useful reflections "about the subject with which it deals" (260), and here too he is similarly vague: "the subject in which I want to instruct him."

What is the "subject" about which Jean-Jacques wants to speak to his pupil? When Rousseau as author chastised the narrator-tutor at the beginning of book III for getting carried away by the emotions evoked by the sunrise—"Pure stupidity!"—Rousseau explained that his pupil will not experience the same sentiments because he does not know "the accents of love and pleasure" or "the hand" responsible for "adorning" "nature's spectacle." We should not be surprised, then, that the subject in which he wants to instruct Emile concerns the divinity and romantic love. First, as for the divinity, apart from the mention of the "Author

of nature" he makes to the reader in setting the stage for his speech, the divinity he reveals is himself: the godlike tutor who discloses to his pupil that he is his creation (323–24). Second, it is a curious lesson in sex education. Rather than stifle pubescent boy's imagination, he will use it to direct his passion: "I shall make him moderate by making him fall in love" (327). Appealing to the boy's imagination with his speech, he conjures an imaginary lover for his imaginary pupil. He asks the reader to imagine his rhetorical powers: "Imagine whether I shall know how to get his ear when I depict for him the beloved whom I destine for him" (328). For the remainder of the work, Emile and his tutor seek and then find Sophie. If an invisible deity who watches over us is needed for corrupt beings such as the young proselyte, or perhaps the reader, Emile will worship at the foot of an ideal woman.

Let us now return to the dramatic setting of the "Profession" in light of these other sunrise stories. Given Rousseau's remarks about rhetoric in general and his particular examples of the effect or lack of effect of sunrise speeches depending on the character of the auditor, it is evident that the intended rhetorical effect on the part of the Savoyard Vicar is to move the boy's passions and imagination. As we know from the information provided about the young proselyte, information presumably also known by the Vicar, the boy's awakened passions and imagination make him susceptible to the persuasive force of the dramatic setting of the Vicar's profession and the contents of profession itself. The Vicar's success is attested to by the young man himself during an intermission after the Vicar completes his theological discourse and before the second part of the speech concerning miracles, revelation, Scripture, and so on: "The good priest had spoken with vehemence. He was moved, and so was I. I believed I was hearing the divine Orpheus sing the first hymns and teaching men the worship of the gods." This is the textual reference to the illustration of Orpheus singing of the gods that "belongs" to book IV, as we saw in the previous chapter. The Vicar's song did not, however, entirely win over his auditor: "Nevertheless I saw a multitude of objections to make to him. I did not make any of them, because they were less solid than disconcerting, and persuasiveness was on his side" (294). To resort to the language Rousseau uses in the *Social Contract* when speaking of the lawgiver: the boy may be persuaded, at least partly, but he was not convinced. At any rate, the emphasis is on persuasion, on being moved by emotional appeals, and not on rational argument.

What if we enlarge our scope to Rousseau's intention in including the "Profession" and its effect on the reader? We can get some light on this question by attending to what the Vicar states about the intended effect of his speech and what Rousseau adds in his own name as the

supposed editor of the "Profession." When he agrees to deliver his profession to the young proselyte, the Vicar states that he will unburden his heart and mind in order to show him why he esteems himself happy, as against the initial incredulity on the boy's part that a poor, persecuted clergyman could possibly be happy (265–66). During the dramatic intermission between the two parts of the "Profession," the youth admits to the Vicar that, whatever his lingering doubts, in his current state he would have to "ascend rather than descend in order to adopt your opinions" (294). When he recommences his speech, the Vicar agrees: "But in your present condition you will profit from thinking as I do." To this last statement quoted, Rousseau in his role as editor adds a note: "This is, I believe, what the good vicar could say to the public at present" (295 and n.). Rousseau thereby indicates the intended audience, or at least *an* intended audience, of the "Profession": "the public," readers actual and potential writ large. Like the young proselyte, who unlike Emile has not imbibed the principles of the natural goodness of man or been educated according to these principles, ordinary readers are corrupted by society, whether or not they know it. The Vicar's profession, and the "Profession" itself, is therefore appropriate for this audience, and its persuasive force is directed at making it useful for them.[23]

Since I have just quoted one of the footnotes Rousseau adds to the "Profession" as the supposed editor, let me briefly remark on the function and effect of these notes as paratextual elements. There are eighteen such notes, nine for each of the two parts into which the "Profession" is divided, and they vary greatly in length. In general, there are two sorts of notes. First, there are notes that provide citations, quotations, and the like, that generally support the content of the text of the "Profession," as though Rousseau is providing editorial apparatus to the Vicar's otherwise unadorned speech. Second, and more important, many of the notes are critical of "modern philosophy," as Rousseau terms it at several points (279 n., 286 n.). First, he criticizes modern philosophy for being reductionist and materialist. Second, he criticizes it for the effects its skepticism and materialism have on religious belief, and therefore popular morality. This is particularly true of the last, and by far the longest, note, wherein he warns readers of the dangers posed by the "philosophic party," suggesting that, unlike religious stories of divine reward and retribution, they can offer no support for popular morality: "Philosopher, your moral laws are very fine. But I beg you to show me their sanction" (312–14 n.). If the Vicar expressly denies that he speaks as a philosopher (266), Rousseau does speak as a philosopher in the notes to the "Profession," warning both the public and philosophers themselves of the dangers of modern philosophy.

To what extent is the "Profession" merely persuasive or useful, that is as opposed to being true? This is a matter for judgment; the Vicar has urged the youth to judge for himself, and Rousseau has invited his reader to do likewise. Because it is not my purpose here to examine the substance of the theological and other arguments in the "Profession" except insofar as they relate to its structural elements, I will limit myself to one issue and will raise it as a question. If the sunrise setting of the Vicar's profession is intended to move the youth's (and the reader's) passions and imagination, how does this persuasive setting relate to its substance, that is, its arguments and their rational force? The spectacle of nature is said to be the "text" for their "conversations" and plays a decisive role in the Vicar's argument. Having established his first "article of faith," that "a will moves the universe and animates the nature," by appealing principally to the interior experience of willing (272–73), he looks out at nature to establish his second dogma, "that matter moved according to certain laws shows me an intelligence" (273–75). Notably, while making this argument he addresses the boy—"Tell me, my friend . . ."—and asks him whether he sees chaos or harmony in the universe. In other words, the boy is asked to look at the spectacle of nature that serves as the setting for his speech. Thus, the dramatic setting of the "Profession" itself provides proof for one of its central arguments. The apparently orderly and harmonious spectacle of nature also provides a kind of negative role in establishing the third and last of the Vicar's "articles of faith." Namely, turning from nature to mankind, the Vicar is struck with the disorder in the moral order, with the prosperity of the wicked and sufferings of the good. Faced with a problem of theodicy, he argues that we must have an immaterial soul (281) and that this immaterial soul exists after death as long as necessary for moral order to be reestablished (283). In short, without entering further into the question of how compelling the Vicar's arguments are, their persuasive force depends on how we interpret the spectacle of nature. This is a question the Vicar leaves to the youth and Rousseau leaves to the reader to judge.

Judging the "Profession"

When he introduces the paper containing the "Profession," Rousseau abdicates his authority to judge its contents and invests the reader with that authority: "It is up to you to see if useful reflections can be drawn from it," and "I am offering it to you for examination" (260). Likewise, the Vicar begins the "Profession" by telling his young auditor: "My child, do not expect either learned speeches or profound reasonings from me. I

am not a great philosopher. . . . It is enough for me to reveal to you what I think in the simplicity of my heart. Consult yours during my speech. That is all I ask of you" (266). Finally, in concluding his "Profession," the Vicar tells the youth: "I have told you my doubts as doubts, my opinions as opinions. I have told you my reasons for doubting and for believing. Now it is for you to judge" (310). We get no explicit judgment of the Vicar's speech from either the young auditor or from Rousseau. Again, the reader is left to judge.

As mentioned above, however, in the intermission between the two parts of the "Profession" the young proselyte states that he saw "a multitude of objections" to make to the Vicar, and Rousseau thereby invites the reader to raise objections as well. Once again without analyzing the substance of the "Profession," let me point to one interesting structural element that may indicate at least one of the "multitude of objections" the youth has to the Vicar's teaching that might be intended to get the reader thinking.

In describing the dramatic setting of the Vicar's speech, the author of the paper states that the spectacle of nature would serve as the text for their conversation (*entretiens*), but there is nonetheless almost no conversation in the "Profession" itself. However, at one point there is an attempt at dialogue. Turning from the theological arguments and the "articles of faith" he has put forward to the question of how we should conduct ourselves based on these "truths," the Vicar advances his central doctrine of conscience (286). Recall that the question of conscience first arose in the dramatic introduction, when the Vicar suggested that he could break his vows of celibacy in good conscience and without remorse because he was acting in accordance with nature (267). Returning to the argument, the Vicar characterizes the conscience as the voice of the soul, as the passions are the voice of the body, and argues that when these voices are in contradiction we should follow conscience: "He who follows conscience does not fear being led astray. This point is important (continued my benefactor, seeing that I was going to interrupt him). Allow me to tarry a bit to clarify it" (286–87). The boy's attempt to interrupt is aborted.

This is the only occasion on which Rousseau inserts a dialogic element into the "Profession" itself. What was the boy going to say? At least two possibilities present themselves. First, related to the Vicar's character and actions, as revealed in the dramatic introduction as well as in the beginning of the "Profession" itself, was the boy going to ask the Vicar whether he wasn't in fact following the voice of the bodily passions in sleeping with unmarried women rather than heeding the voice of conscience? Is the Vicar's appeal to conscience a rationalization of

his behavior? Or, less harshly, how do we distinguish between the voice of the body and the voice of the soul? Second, and related to the central doctrine of Rousseau's philosophy of the natural goodness of man being advanced in the main text of *Emile*, but not in the "Profession," was the boy—perhaps the future Jean-Jacques Rousseau—going to propose an alternative theory of the conflict we find within ourselves, explaining it not as a conflict between body and soul but instead as a conflict between the natural goodness of man and his corruption in society? In this case, conscience for Rousseau himself would seem to have a different basis than the dualist theory put forward by the Vicar.

Perhaps we should view this failed attempt at dialogue on the part of the auditor of the "Profession" as another invitation to the reader to compare the arguments of the "Profession" to those made in the main body of *Emile*. In this light, perhaps we should also contemplate the possibility that Rousseau presents us with another inapt apologue, or perhaps a partially apt one, when he summarizes his intention in including it in the work. Resuming his authorial role after the conclusion of the "Profession," he writes: "I have transcribed this writing not as a rule for the sentiments that one ought to follow in religious matters, but as an example of the way one can reason with one's pupil in order not to diverge from the method I have tried to establish" (313–14). Rousseau does not repeat his invitation to the reader to judge the "Profession," but perhaps that is precisely what we are asked to do.